

Edman
M E M O I R S

ILLUSTRATING THE
MANNERS of the Present AGE,

Wherein are Contained
The Remarkable Incidents in the Life of
a young Nobleman.

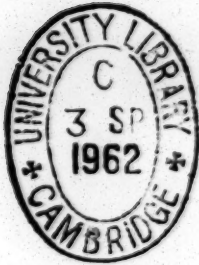
By Monsieur *DU CLOS*,
Historiographer to the *French* King, and Member
of the Royal Academy at *Paris*.

Translated from the *French* by a GENTLEMAN.

In Two VOLUMES.

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THE
TRANSLATOR'S
P R E F A C E.

A Work of this Sort should necessarily be founded on Truth, flowing naturally from the Principles of Manners, which are as sure, invariable, and far more precious than those of Geometry. Having nothing material in them, they depend entirely on the Understanding without the Help of the Senses; and the Rule and Compass by which they are measured, are found in every judicious and cultivated Mind.

To clear up therefore these Principles,
and distinguish them in the different Forms

in which they appear, requires all the Strength of an elevated Genius, all the Fire of a rich, shining, and fruitful Imagination, and all the Art, Justness, Precision, and Accuracy of a refined Taste.

Nor are even these rare Endowments enough: An Author of this Kind must besides express his Thoughts in a noble, elegant, and unaffected Manner; and if it be sometimes allowed him to shade them with a Veil of Obscurity, it is because they should appear delivered in the Style of an Oracle.

When they thus bear the Stamp of Truth, and wear that commanding imperious Air in which Reason supported by Eloquence appears, they force our Assent, carry Conviction with them, and fully satisfy the Mind and Heart.

But this must be the Fruit of long Experience and Study. Too much Regularity often weakens our Ideas, which rise from the Imagination in their natural Colours, and want only to be ranged in right Order, and placed in a proper Light.

This noble Assortment of Thought, this happy Assemblage of Ideas is however more difficult than it appears to be at first Sight. It supposes a penetrating Mind, accustomed to Abstractions and free from Prepossession;

a Heart full of Sincerity, Candour, and Probity ; an ardent Zeal for Truth ; a surprizing Flexibility of Wit ; an uncommon Delicacy of Sentiment ; and a consummate Knowledge of the World.

Experience has proved that no Kind of Writing has been so useful to the World, as that which condemns Vice, roots up hurtful Prejudices, shews the Ridiculousness of fashionable Vices or Follies, attacks Immorality, and encourages Virtue. A Play that is not calculated for correcting the Mind or mending the Heart, an History without an useful Object, or a Novel without a laudable Design, can amuse only weak and superficial Minds. And though these whimsical Productions should contribute in some Measure to form and perfect our Taste, yet they generally corrupt the Heart. Suppose them adorned with the finest Strokes of Fancy, and all the Graces that Eloquence can lavish, still they are, for the most Part, no more than the undigested Product of a lively Imagination, where some frivolous or unnatural Events disguised by the Artifice of Words, take up the Place of Truth, and sometimes even of Probability. Reason is forced to acquiesce in the capricious Pleasure they afford, and grows at length so familiar with them, that solid Beauties in other Authors are neglected. It is not a shame for Reason, Learning, and good Sense, that

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most of our Libraries are only a general Rendezvous of the greatest Extravagancies, and of the wildest and most ridiculous Fancies the Mind of Man is capable of inventing ?

Such Writers on the contrary, as deserve the Attention of the Public, have the Good of Society in View; their Labours proceed by Argument to the Demonstration of Truth. The World is the Book that furnishes them with Materials; their Compilations are taken from the Weakness of Humanity; their Authorities from the Incidents of Life, and their Examples from the Virtues or Vices of Mankind.

Nor do they attempt to fathom the boundless Ocean of *Metaphysics*, where all human Knowledge is swallowed up, but confine themselves prudently to such Parts of it as are of a fixed and determined Application; such as by discovering the internal Causes from which our Actions and Characters arise, fix the Principles of our Conduct, open our Views, enlarge the Sphere of our Knowledge, strengthen our Judgment, soften and polish our Manners, and enforce the Practice of our most essential Duties.

How far the Author of the following Treatise has succeeded in an Undertaking
(which

(which from this Exposition of it, appears to be so difficult) has already been determined by the learned Men of his Country, where it has been universally admired *. Whether in another Dress it deserves to meet the like Reception, must be left to the Judgment and Decision of the Public.

It cannot be denied but that he is a perfect Master of that Sort of Wit which he tells us, seizes an Object, twines round it, and afterwards winds about to another; that penetrates into the inmost Recesses of it with Strength, unravels all its Folds, and represents it with Clearness. True Wit is like *Mercury*, which in all the various Forms it puts on, loses nothing of its intrinsic Virtue.

It must also be allowed, that his Plan and his Manner of treating it, are new, regular, and drawn from Nature; that his Disquisitions are not confined to a speculative and barren Knowledge, but applicable to the different Circumstances of Life; that he gives his Subject that masterly, strong, and natural Colouring, which
shews

* J'ai cru qu'à cette seconde edition le public ne pouvoit que confirmer le jugement avantageux qu'il a déjà porté sur l'étendue des lumieres et le gout de probité qui regnent dans cette ouvrage. *Fontenay.*

shews him to be an excellent Moral Painter, and that nothing can be more exact than his Definitions, nothing more refined than his Distinctions.

He leaves to Authors of a middling Capacity, (who see nothing in an Object but what at first strikes their Sight,) the slavish Regularity of swelling their Volumes with a perpetual Round of Divisions and Subdivisions; of Articles, Points, and Sections; and rises from this dry, tedious and uniform Method to a general Order, consisting in a natural Succession of Ideas, disposed in such a Manner, that they reflect a Brightness on each other. By this Method his Transitions are easy, happy, and so fitted to the Subject, that their Connexion with it is felt more strongly than it is expressed.

There is perhaps no Language that can express the different Operations of the Mind, or the Affections of the Heart, with so much Strength, Beauty, and Energy, as the *English*; it paints the Sentiments of Love with Softness, Rapture, and Vivacity; of Friendship with Warmth and Good-Nature; of Hatred with Passion and Resentment; of Sorrow with Bitterness and Anguish; and of Despair with Trouble, Confusion, and Emphasis. It is therefore surprizing that among the great Genius's who have adorned

adorned our Country, and have justly acquired a general and constant Approbation in almost all the Branches of Learning, there are so few who have found out or followed the Paths which have led *La Bruyere*, *La Rochefoucault*, and *Pascal* to immortal Honour and Reputation. And still our Taste for this Kind of Writing appears plainly from the lively Manner in which we are affected by the *sentimental* Truths interspersed in most of our dramatick and poetical Performances. Unril some more elaborate Work on this Subject appears, it is to be presumed, that in a Country where good Sense and close Reasoning have ever been held in the highest Esteem, the following Observations on the *Manners* of the present Age will be received with Candour.

T H E



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MEMOIRS

UPON THE

MANNERS of this Age.

THE Desire I have to be useful to those, who are to live in the World, is the Motive that engages me, to collect some Reflections on the most striking and affecting Objects I met with. The Sciences have made a truly considerable Progress, only since we have endeavoured to resolve, destroy or confirm our Systems by Experience, Examination, and confronting of Facts. And the same Method should also be practised, with Regard to the Science of Manners. We have some good Works on this Subject; but as Manners are liable to Revolutions, the Observations made at one Time, are not exactly applicable to another. The Principles drawn from Nature always exist, but to be thoroughly convinced of their Truth, it is highly necessary to observe the different Forms in which they are disguised; without changing them, which, by
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their Union and Connexion with these Principles, tend more strongly to confirm them.

It were therefore to be wished, that those who had it in their Power to know Mankind, had communicated their Observations to the Publick; which would be as useful to the Science of Manners, as the Journals of Seamen have been to Navigation. Facts and Observations well followed, lead us necessarily to the Discovery of their Principles; whereas Principles that are purely speculative, are seldom sure, and having more rarely any fixed Application, fall often into the Vague of Systems.

What I propose, in considering Manners, is to discover Man's Principles by his Conduct, and perhaps to conciliate his Contradictions. Man is inconsequent in his Actions, for no other Reason, but his being inconstant in his Principles.

Though this Work seems to be calculated chiefly for the Knowledge of this Age, I hope the Examination of the present Characters of Mankind, will serve to make Men of all Ages known.

I shall divide the different Articles, I propose to treat of, into Chapters, for Order and Perspicuity; and chuse the Subjects that appear to me most important, whose Application is most frequently met with, and most extensive? by their Re-union, I will endeavour to make them concur to the same End, which is the Knowledge of Manners.

I hope my Notions will prove equally distant from the Servitude and Licentiousness of Writing; and shall employ, like a good Citizen, the Liberty which Truth has Occasion for.

If this Work takes, it will please me exceedingly; if it is judged useful it will heighten my Content.

C H A P. I.

On Manners in general.

BEFORE we talk of Manners, let us begin by determining the Ideas, which are annexed to this Term ; I say the Ideas, for it is one of those Words, which having no *Synonima*, receives various Acceptations.

Manners, when we talk of Persons in private Life, signify nothing else but the Practice of moral Virtues, or the Depravation of Conduct, according as this Term is taken in a good or bad Sense ; but when it is relative to a Nation, it means their Ways and Customs, not those, which being indifferent in themselves, depend on the Caprice of an arbitrary Mode ; but the Ways which influence or depend upon their Manner of Thinking, Feeling, and Acting. It is in this Light I consider Manners.

It would be wrong to imagine that such Considerations are purely speculative Ideas. The Errors we may embrace, on this Subject, are occasioned by many Authors, who writing on Morality, begin by supposing, that Man is but a Compound of Misery and Corruption ; and that he can produce no good or valuable Thing. This System is as false as it is dangerous. Men are equally capable of good and bad ; they can be corrected, since they can be perverted ; else why are they punished, why recompenced, or instructed ? But to have a Right to reprove, and be entitled to correct them, it would be necessary first, to love Humanity ; thus we become just towards them without Harshness or Rigour, and indulgent without Meanness or Remissness.

Men are, it is said, full of Self-Love, and attached to their Interest. Well, suppose them so. These Dispositions have nothing vicious in themselves ; they become good or bad, by the Effects they produce. Thus we can form no Judgment of the Sap of Plants, but by their Fruits. What would become of Society, if it was deprived of its Springs, if our Passions were retrenched ? Let Men be taught to love one another, let the Necessity

of their Happiness be proved to them by so doing. It can be demonstrated, that their Glory and Interest are found only, in the Practice of their Duties. They are deceived, but to be made more miserable; on Account of the low Opinion they learn from some Authors to conceive of themselves: In this Sense, they can be criminal, without having Reason to blush for it. To make them better Men, they have need only of Instruction; as Crimes, in the Manner they are given to understand them, are sometimes nothing else but false Judgments.

This is the Science of Morality, a Science which is more important, and as sure as those founded on Demonstration. No sooner is there a Society of Men formed, than there are also Morals and sure Principles of Conduct. We are linked together by a mutual Chain, and are equally indebted to each other, let our Duties be never so different. This is as sure in Morality, as it is in Geometry, that all the Rays of a Circle are equal, and meet in one Point.

It is therefore our Duty to examine the Errors of Men; but this Examination should be made on Manners in general; on the different Classes that compose Society; not on the Manners of particular People, whose Pictures should not be drawn to an exact Resemblance, but the Portraiture of Mankind painted in proper Colours. In this consists the principal Difference between Morality and Satyr.

Nations, like private Men, have their distinguishing Characters; with this Difference, that the Manners of a private Man are the Result of his Character, but do not necessarily constitute it; whereas the Manners of a Nation, form precisely a national Character.

The most savage People are the most criminal; and the Infancy of a Nation is not its Age of Innocence. Excess and Disorder form the first Notion of Laws: Their Establishment is owing to Want, often to Crimes, but not to Foresight.

Nor are the most polished People the most virtuous. Severe and simple Manners are only to be met with amongst these, who are governed by Reason and Equity;

ty; and who have not as yet prostituted their Minds to Corruption. The best regulated People are more to be prized than the most polite. The Laws of Barbarians form and soften their Manners; and the Manners of a civilized People, strengthen, supply, and perfect the Laws, which by false Politeness are forgot. The most happy State would be, where Virtue was not reckoned a Merit. When Virtue begins to be remarked, then Manners change; when it becomes ridiculous, then is the highest Degree of Corruption.

It would be an Object of great Moment, to examine the different Characters of Nations; and the physical or moral Cause of their Difference: but it would be Rashness to undertake it, without being thoroughly and equally acquainted with the People compared; besides such an Undertaking would lie under the Suspicion of Partiality; and the Study of Men we must live with, is what is truly useful to us.

Without stirring out of our own Country, what a vast and varied Field have we! And without entering into subdivisions, which would be more real than sensible; what a Difference, what Opposition of Manners, do we not observe, between the Capital and the Provinces? they differ as much, as one Nation from another.

Such as live a hundred Leagues from the Capital, are, at least an Age behind us, in their Manner of thinking and acting, I do not deny Exceptions; as I speak only in general; nor do I pretend to decide, where the real Superiority lies. I only take Notice of the Difference.

When a Man, who has been a long Time absent from the Metropolis, returns to it, it is observed he is grown *rusty*: When perhaps he is become more reasonable, but he certainly differs from what he was. It is only at *Paris*, a *Frenchman* should be considered, here he is more so than elsewhere.

My Observations do not regard those, who devoted to private Occupations, or to painful Labour, have, every where, no other Ideas, but such as are relative to their Situation, and independent of the Places they inhabit. There are more of these Victims of Labour at *Paris*, than in any other Part of the World.

I consider those chiefly, whose Idleness and Opulence suggest Variety of Ideas, fantastical Judgments, inconstant Sentiments and Affections, which give a free Spring and Scope to their Character. These Men alone form a People in the Capital. Seized with alternate Fits of Dissipation, Ambition, or what they call Philosophy; that is to say Humour or Misanthropy; hurried away with Pleasures, or tormented sometimes with Interest or frivolous Fancies, their Ideas are never pursued, are often in Contradiction, and appear to themselves successively of equal Evidence. Their Occupations are different at *Paris* from what they are in the Provinces; Even Idleness in both Places, wears a different Aspect: In one, it is a Languor, a Numbness, a material Existence; in the other, it is an Activity without Design, Motion without an Object. They feel more at *Paris* than they think, act more than they project, and project more than they resolve. They esteem only the modish Talents and Arts; and scarce have any Notion of the necessary Arts, which are enjoyed without being known.

The Ties of Blood decide nothing about their Friendship; they only require Duties of Decency; whereas in the Provinces good Offices are exacted; not that they love each other better, but because they seem to have nearer Degrees of Affinity.

There reigns at *Paris*, a certain general Indifference, which multiplies their transient Tastes, and unites them in such a Manner, that every one is agreeable in Society, and no one necessary. The extreme Dissipation in which they live, is the Cause, why they do not concern themselves enough for each other, to have any Delicacy or Constancy in their Ties.

Though they meet with Pleasure, yet they seek each other's Company but very little; thus they receive and entertain each other, with more Vivacity than Warmth, and quit without Regret or Attention.

Manners are at *Paris*, what the Spirit of Government is in *London*; in Society they confound and put all the Ranks on a Level, which are distinguished and subordinate in the State. In *London*, all Orders live in Familiarity,

Familiarity, because they want each other, and their Interest unites them.

Pleasures produce the same Effect at *Paris*; all those who are pleased with each other, agree; with this Difference, that Equality is a valuable Benefit, when it is founded on the Principles of Government; and is a great Evil, when it proceeds from Manners; because this never happens, but through their Corruption.

A *Frenchman's* greatest Fault is, that he is always young, and scarce ever a Man; hence he is often amiable, but seldom sure: He hardly ever ripens with Years, and passes directly from Youth to old Age. He gives an early Proof of his Talents in every Kind; which he neglects a long Time, through Dissipation; and he hardly begins to employ them, when their Time is passed. There are but few amongst us, whose Knowledge is founded on Experience.

Shall I venture an Observation, which perhaps is not as well grounded, as it appears to me; but I think, that when we are passed sixty, we are no longer fit for such of our Talents, as require Strength and Vigour in their Execution. We never succeed better in whatever we undertake, than in the middle Age of Life; which is very short, nay we succeed better in Youth, than in old Age. If we had formed our Minds to an early Reflection, (and this Education I believe is possible,) we should be without Contradiction, the first of Nations, because in spite of our Faults, there are none that can be preferred to us. Perhaps we could even value ourselves on the Jealousy of a great many. For Jealousy rises only from Superiority; as for those Nations that fairly prefer themselves to us, it is because their Want of Merit does not entitle them to Jealousy.

On the other hand, most *Frenchmen* believe it is a Merit to be so; with these Sentiments, how little is wanting to them, to become Patriots? I do not speak of those who esteem only Strangers. Some People affect to despise their Country, because they are not willing to own their Superiours, or Rivals, too near them.

Men of Merit, of whatever Country they are, form but one amongst themselves. They are divested of

childish national Vanity, which they leave to the Vulgar, to those who having no personal Glory, are forced to pride themselves on that of their Countrymen.

We should not therefore allow ourselves any rash or injurious Parallel : But if it be permitted to remark the Faults of our Country, it is our Duty to raise its Merit ; and a *Frenchman* has one distinctive Characteristick.

It is the only Nation, whose Manners can be depraved without Corruption of Heart, or Alteration of Courage, that joins heroick Qualities with Pleasure, Luxury, and Effeminacy ; whose Virtues have but little Consistency, and whose Vices have no Roots. The Character of *Alcibiades* is often found in *France*. The Corruption of their Manners and Imagination does not lessen the Candour, Openness, and natural Goodness of a *Frenchman* ; Self-Love contributes to make him amiable ; the more he believes he pleases, the greater Desire he has to love. That frivolous Vanity, which appears in the unfolding of his Talents and Virtues, preserves him at the same Time, from perfidious reflected Crimes. Treachery is a Stranger to him, and only borrowed in his Intrigues. If sometimes, odious Crimes were seen amongst us, they disappeared, sooner, on Account of our national Character, than the Severity of our Laws.

A very learned People, and highly esteemable in a great many Respects, complain, that Corruption is risen to such a Degree, that there are no more Principles of Honour left amongst them ; that their Actions are all valued, and bear an exact Proportion with their Interest, insomuch that a *Tariff* of their Honesty could be made.

I am very far from believing the Humour and Declamations of Party ; but if there had been such a People, (which I cannot believe) they would be composed of an infinite Number of bad and low-minded Men, to be gained at all Prices ; and more Wickedness found amongst them, than in any other Part of the World ; whereas the Value of all their Virtues could be calculated.

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This is not, happily, our Case. We have but few Men addicted to Crimes by System; Misery is the chief Rock on which our Probity is wrecked. A *Frenchman* is hurried away by Example, and seduced by Want; but he does not betray his Virtue on Purpose: Necessity begets only Faults, but Avarice reduced into System, Crimes.

It is at least a great Advantage, not to suppose that Honesty can become venal; it hinders a great many People from seeking its Price; and it can exist no longer, when it is set up at Auction.

The Abuses and Inconveniencies which are observed amongst us, would not be without a Remedy, if we pleased; without entering into a Detail of those, which belong as much to Authority, as to Philosophy; what real Advantages would not a People receive, whose general Education was fitted to their Genius, to their natural Qualities, to their Virtues, and even to their Faults?

CHAP. II.

On Education.

THERE is a great deal of Instruction found amongst us, but very little Education. We have learned Men and Artists of all Sorts; every Branch of Learning, Sciences, and Arts is cultivated with Success. but we have not yet attempted to form Men, that is to say, to breed them up respectively for each other, and build, on the Basis of general Education, all particular Instructions, so as to accustom them, to seek their private Advantages on the Plan of publick Good, and make them, in every Profession, begin to be Patriots.

We have all of us, in our Hearts, the Seeds of Virtues and Vices; one should be repressed, and the other unfolded. All the Faculties of the Soul, are reduced to Sentiment and Thought; our Pleasures consist in loving and knowing: we need therefore, only regulate and exercise these Dispositions, to make Men useful and happy, by the Good they are capable of doing, and

which they would experience themselves. Such is the Education, which ought to be general and uniform; whereas Instruction should be varied, and different according to the State, Inclination and Disposition of those, who are to be instructed.

This is not an Idea of an imaginary Republick; besides, such Ideas are at least, happy Models, Chimeras that are not quite so, which can be realized, to a certain Degree. A great many Things seem impossible, only because we are accustomed to think them so. A contrary Opinion, and some Courage would often make Things easy, which Prepossession and Cowardice judge impracticable.

Can we look upon what is brought into Execution, to be chimerical? Have not some antient People, such as the *Egyptians* and *Spartans*, had an Education relative to the State, whose Constitution was in some Measure, formed by it?

It would be vain, to call Manners, so distant from ours, in Question: We can know Antiquity, but by the Testimony of Historians; they all confirm and agree in this Article. But as we judge of Men, only by our own Age, we can scarce persuade ourselves, that there have been any formerly, more wise, than at present; though we can't forbear repeating it, through a Spirit of Contradiction. I willingly give some Allowance for a philosophical Doubt, by supposing, that Historians have embellished their Subjects; but this is what proves precisely to a Philosopher, that what they writ is grounded upon Truth. They are far from giving the same Testimony of other Nations, whose Glory, notwithstanding, they would have been glad to raise.

It is therefore certain, that in the Education, which was given at *Sparta*, they applied themselves first to form *Spartans*. Thus in every State, Men should be inspired with the Sentiments of good Citizens. *Frenchmen* should be formed amongst us, and for this Purpose, Care should be taken to make them Men.

I don't know whether I have too good an Opinion of our Age; but it appears to me, that there is a Sort of Fermentation of universal Reason, that works to clear

itself

itself up, which perhaps, will be suffered to evaporate; and which could serve to confirm and hasten the Progress of a regular Education.

Far from proposing these great Principles to ourselves, our Thoughts are employed in some Methods of particular Instructions, the Application of which is as yet very uncertain.

Artisans and Artists whose Existence depends upon their Labour, are perhaps the only People, who receive Instructions suitable to their Destination; but the same are likewise given to those, who are born to some Fortune. There is a certain Collection of Skill and Knowledge, prescribed by Use, which they learn imperfectly; and with which they are deemed instructed, in all they want to know, whatever the Professions may be, to which they are destined.

This is what is called Education, and what so little deserves the Name of it. Most Men who think, are so convinced that there is no good one, that those who have their Children's Interest at Heart, form new Plans to bring them up in. It is true, they are often deceived in the Means of reforming they devise; and their Care is ordinarily confined, in abridging and smoothing the Way to Sciences; but their Conduct proves, at least, that they have a confused Notion of the Faults of usual Education, without discerning precisely in what they consist.

Hence proceed the fantastical Choice that is made, and the Errors which even those fall into, who seek Truth with more Sincerity than Discernment.

Some do not distinguish either the Term, where general Education should end, or the Nature of the particular Education, which should follow the first; and often adopt that, which suits the least with the Man who is to be formed. This deserves notwithstanding, the greatest Attention. In general Education, Men should be considered with relation to Humanity and to their Country, these are the Objects of Morality. In particular Education, Man's State and Condition, his natural Dispositions and personal Talents should be regarded. Such is, or ought to be, the Object of Instruction, but the Con-

duſt that is followed, appears to me to be quite different.

When a Work deſtined for the Education of a Prince, meets with Applauſe, the leaſt Gentleman thinks it is proper for the Education of his Son. Here a fooliſh Vanity decides more than Judgment. What Relation or Conformity is there in Reality, between theſe two Men, one of whom is to command, and the other to obey, without having even the Choice or Manner of his Obedience in his Power.

Others are driven by Prejudice, to another Extreme, more dangerous than the moſt imperfect Education. They look upon all the Principles they have received, as ſo many Errors, and univerſally proſcribe them. Yet Prejudices themſelves, ought to be diſcuſſed and treated with Circuſpection.

Prejudice is nothing elſe but a Judgment formed or admitted without being examined; and can be true or falſe.

Prejudices hurtful to Society, can be nothing elſe but Errors; and cannot be too much oppoſed. Nor ſhould we entertain Errors, which of themſelves are indifferent, if there be any ſuch: In theſe Caſes, Prudence is required, which is often neceſſary; even when we wage War againſt Vice, we ought not to root up the Tares too raſhly. For what concerns Prejudices tending to the Good of Society, which are Seeds of Virtue, we can be aſſured, they are Truths that muſt be reſpected and followed. It is uſeleſs to take Pains to demonſtrate Truths, which are received; it is enough to recommend the Practice of them. In attempting to enlighten Men too much, they are only inſpired with dangerous Preſumption. Why ſhould any one undertake to make them practice by Argument, what they followed by Sentiment, and an honeſt laudable Prejudice; which are as ſure guides as Argument?

A great Ciamour has been raiſed for ſome Time againſt Prejudices; perhaps but too many of them were deſtroyed; Prejudice is the Law of moſt People. A Diſcuſſion on this Topick, requires ſure Principles and uncommon Light. Moſt Men being uncapable of ſuch an

an Examination, ought to consult their interior Sentiment : which the most Learned can often prefer to the Light of their Reason, in what regards Morality ; and take their Taste or Repugnance for the surest Rule of Conduct. It is hard to be deceived by this Method : When one has the Heart-felt Pleasure of behaving well towards others, it seldom happens, that he is dissatisfied. There are but few Reproaches to be made to those who do not reproach themselves ; and it is useless to upbraid such People, as have left off upbraiding themselves.

I cannot forbear, on this Subject, blaming those Writers, who under Pretext of attacking Superstition, which would be a laudable and useful Motive, if they kept within the Bounds of patriot Philosophers, endeavour to undermine the Foundations of Morality, and loosen the Bonds of Society : They are by so much the more mistaken, as it would be of dangerous Consequence to themselves to make Profelytes. The fatal Effects these Writings produce, are to make their Readers bad Citizens, and scandalous Transgressors in their Youth, and unhappy Men in a more advanced Age : For there are but few, who have the sad Advantage of being perverted enough, to be easy in their Mind.

The Eagerness, with which this Sort of Books is read should not, methinks, flatter the Authors, who otherwise may have a great deal of Merit. They cannot but know, that the most miserable Writers in this Kind, share almost equally this Honour with them. Satyr, Licentiousness and Impiety alone, have never proved Wit. The most despicable Works on this Head, may be read once ; were it not for their Extravagance, they never would have been mentioned ; like those unhappy Men, who are condemned to Darknes, and whose Names the Publick is made acquainted with, only on Account of their Crimes or Punishment.

To return to Prejudices ; there is a sure Method enough of judging of them, without a formal Discussion ; which would prove easy, and often applicable to particular Circumstances, especially in Morality. It consists in observing the Things, that raise our Vanity, which probably arise from false Ideas. The more virtuous a Man
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is, the farther he is removed from Vanity, and the more persuaded he knows nothing but his Duty; for Virtue does not beget Pride.

The most tenacious Prejudices are always those, whose Foundation is the least solid. We can be undeceived in our reasoned Errors, by reasoning farther upon them. A stronger and more forcible Reason gets the better of the first; but how can we attack what has neither Principle nor Consequence? and such are all false Prejudices. They are begot and grow insensibly with fortuitous Circumstances, and are at length generally established amongst Men before they perceive their Progress. It is not surprising, that false Opinions have risen, without the Knowledge even of those, who are the most attached to them; but they fall of themselves as they gained Ground. It is not Reason that proscribes them, they succeed each other, and perish with the Revolution of Time. They make Room one for the other, because our Mind can receive but a limited Number of Errors.

Some Opinions which are consecrated and generally received amongst us, will appear absurd to our Grand-Children; none but the Philosophers of their Time, will be able to conceive that these Opinions could have had Abettors. Men do not require Proofs, in order to adopt an Opinion; their Mind wants only to be made familiar with it, as our Eyes with Modes.

There are some Prejudices, which are known, or at least acknowledged to be false, by those who make them serve their Turn. For Example, that of Birth is allowed to be such, even by those who tire us the most with their Pedigree. They do not fail, unless they are stupidly proud to repeat, they know Nobility of Blood is a meer Chimera. Yet there is no Prejudice harder to break one's self of: There are but few Men wise enough to esteem Nobility as an Advantage, and not as a Merit; and who content themselves to enjoy it without Vanity. Let new Men, whose Dirt was but lately rubbed off, be drunk with Titles that do not fit them; they are in some Measure excusable: But it is surprising to find the same Madness in those, who can rely on the Dignity and Publickness of their Name. If they pretend, by this Means,

Means, to force Respect, they exaggerate their Pretensions, and carry them beyond their Right. Respect of Obligation is only due to those, whom we are subordinate to by Duty, to our true Superiors, whom we should always distinguish from others, whose Rank only is superior to ours. Respect paid only to Birth is a Duty of meer Decorum; it is an Homage to the Memory of Ancestors, who have made their Name illustrious; an Homage which with Respect to their Descendants, is in some Sort like the Worship of Images, to which no peculiar Virtue is attributed, as they are the Productions of common Art; and have only a relative Respect paid them.

If we had a Mind to examine the most Part of received Opinions, what a Number of false Prejudices would not we find, even in considering those only, whose Examination is relative to Education? We follow by Habit, and with Confidence, the Ideas established by Chance.

If Education was guided by Reason, Men would acquire a great many Truths with more Facility than they receive a small Number of Errors. Truths have one with another, a Relation, a Connection, and Affinity, Points of Contact, which help Knowledge and Memory; whereas Errors stand generally by themselves, and are more efficacious than consequent; greater Efforts are required to be undeceived, than to be preserved from them.

Ordinary Education is far from being systematical, when some imperfect Notions of Things, which are but of very little Use, are acquired; the chief Instruction that is afterwards recommended, is the Means of making a Fortune. Politeness is the Morality we are taught, which is more a necessary Means of acquiring a Fortune, than a Lesson of Humanity.

What does this Politeness consist in? which is so much recommended, on which so much was writ, so many Precepts given, and so few fixed Ideas? Subjects, which were so often treated, are looked upon to be exhausted; and those, whose Importance is cried up, to be clear and evident. I do not flatter myself with the
Thoughts

Thoughts of treating this Matter better than has been already done ; but I will tell my Mind in a few Words. There are some inexhaustible Subjects ; besides it is useful, that those whose Knowledge concerns us nearly, should appear in different Lights, and be seen by different Eyes. Weak Eyes, whose Weakness even makes them more attentive, perceive sometimes what has escaped a more extended and rapid Sight.

Politeness is the Expression or Imitation of social Virtues ; it is the Expression, if it be true, and the Imitation, if it be false : Social Virtues make us useful or agreeable to those we live with. A Man who enjoys them all, is certainly polite in the highest Degree.

But how does it happen, that a Man of an elevated Genius, of a generous Heart, and exact Justice, is wanting in Politeness, whilst it is found in another of shallow Understanding, in one, who has always his own Interest at Heart, or a Man of suspected Probity ? It is because the first wants some social Qualities, such as Prudence, Discretion, Reserve, or Indulgence for the Faults and Weakness of Men. One of the first social Virtues, is to tolerate in others, what we should forbid ourselves. Whereas the second, without having any Virtue, has the Art to imitate them all. He knows how to shew Respect to his Superiors, Goodness to his Inferiors, Esteem to his Equals, and persuades them all, that he thinks favourably of them, without having one of the Sentiments he imitates.

Nor are they now so much as required ; the Art of feigning is what constitutes the Politeness of our Days. This Art is often ridiculous and vile enough to be given for what it is, that is to say, for Falshood.

Men know, that the Politeness they shew each other is but an Imitation of Esteem. They agree in general, that the obliging Things they say, are not the Language of Truth or of the Heart ; and in particular Occasions, they themselves are deceived and gulled in their Turn. Self-Love makes every one believe foolishly, that what is done through Decorum, is a Justice paid them.

Though we were convinced that Protestations of Esteem are false, yet we prefer them to Sincerity ; because
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this Falshood has an Air of Respect in some Occasions, where Candour and Truth would be offensive. A Man knows that others think ill of him, and this mortifies him; to acknowledge it to himself, would insult him, deprive him of the Resource he seeks in blinding himself, and prove to him, how little he is esteemed. Such as are most united, and have most Reason to esteem each other, would become mortal Enemies, if they shewed plainly, and without Disguise, what they think of each other. There is a certain Veil of Obscurity, which preserves Friendship, and which we are all afraid to lift up.

I am far from advising Men to shew harshly, what they think, as they are often deceived in their Opinions, which they are apt to retract, without being able afterwards to form sounder Judgments. This Harshness is allowed only to Friendship, though sure soever Men may be of their Judgment, and should moreover be authorised by Necessity, and Hopes of succeeding. Cruel Operations were found out, but to save our Lives, and Palliatives to alleviate our Pains.

Let those whose Employment it is to correct Manners, pronounce harsh Truths; their Voice is only addressed to the Publick: but particular People receive no Correction, but by proving it to be their Interest, and by sparing their Self-Love.

But what Kind of Dissimulation is permitted, or rather, where lies the Medium, which separates vile Falshood from offensive Sincerity? in mutual Regard, that forms the Bonds of Society, and grows from the Conviction of our own Imperfections, and the Need we have of Indulgence. Men should neither be deceived, nor offended.

It appears, that in the Education of the People of the World, they are supposed incapable of Virtue; and that they would have reason to blush, had they shewed themselves to be what they really are; as if a Mask was a Remedy for Deformity.

The Politeness which is in Use, is but a silly Jargon, full of exaggerated Expressions, as void of Sense as of Sentiment.

Politeness,



Politeness, however, shews, it is said, a Man of Birth; the greatest Men are the most polite. I own that this Politeness is the first Mark of Elevation, and a Bulwark against Familiarity. There is a great Difference between Politeness and Sweetness of Temper; and a greater between Sweetness of Temper and Goodness. Great Men who keep us at a Distance with Politeness without Goodness, should also be paid in their Turn, with Respect without Attachment.

It is added, that Politeness proves an Education well taken Care of, and our having lived in chosen Company; it requires so nice a Touch, and so delicate a Sentiment for whatever is suitable or agreeable, that such as have not been initiated in it, in their Youth, make but vain Efforts to acquire it afterwards; and can never go through it gracefully and genteely. First, the Difficulty of a Thing, is not a Proof of its Excellence. Secondly, it is to be wished, that Men who purposely renounce their Character, should gather no other Fruit but that of becoming ridiculous; this perhaps would bring them back to Truth and plain Dealing.

Besides, this exquisite Politeness is not so rare, as those who have no other Merit would persuade us. It produces now a Days so little Effect, as its Falschood is so well known, that it is sometimes disagreeable, even to those whom it is addressed to, insomuch, that some People think it adviseable to act in a rude and clownish Manner, the better to imitate Openness and Sincerity, and cover their Designs. Thus they are rude without being sincere, and false without being polite.

This Practice is common enough to be known better than it is as yet. It should be forbid every Man to shew any Roughness, who cannot excuse this Blemish in his Character by an irreproachable Conduct.

Not but that we can join a great deal of Address with a great deal of Uprightness; but it is only a Continuance of open Proceedings that forms the Distinction between Address and Artifice.

We should not, for this Reason, regret the rustick Times, when Men swayed only by their Interest, always pursued it, by a savage Instinct, to the Prejudice of others.

others. Rudeness and Ill-breeding do not exclude either Fraud or Artifice, which are observed in the most fierce and untractable Animals.

It is by polishing themselves, Men have learned to reconcile their private with the common Interest ; and by this Conformity have experienced, that every Man draws more from Society than he could put into it.

Men owe therefore, some Regard to each other ; whereas they are indebted, one to another, for Gratitude. They owe each other a reciprocal Politeness, worthy of them, made for rational Beings, and varied with the different Sentiments, which inspire it.

Thus the Politeness of great Men ought to be Humanity ; that of Inferiors, Gratitude, if great Men deserve it ; that of Equals Esteem and mutual good Offices. Far from excusing Rusticity, it were to be wished, that the Politeness which flows from Sweetness of Manners, was always united with that, which rises from the Uprightness and Integrity of the Heart.

The most unhappy Effect which usual Politeness produces, is to teach us the Art of making no Account of the Virtues we imitate. Let us, in our Education, be inspired with Humanity, Bounty and Benevolence, and we shall, by this Means, learn Politeness, or have no farther Need of it.

If we want that Sort of Politeness which is attended with Graces, we shall have that which shews and proves an honest Man, and a good Subject ; and shall have no Occasion to have Recourse to Falshood.

Thus instead of Artifice, in order to please, Goodness will suffice ; and instead of Falshood, in order to flatter the Weakness of others, it will be enough to be indulgent.

We can avoid puffing those up with Pride, or corrupting them, with whom we act in this Manner : They will shew us their Gratitude for it, and become better Men.

This is the Foundation on which general Education should be built, in order to prepare particular Instructions.

C H A P. III.

On Probity, Virtue and Honour.

WE hear nothing talked of so much as Probity, Virtue, and Honour; but have all those, who make use of these Expressions, uniform Ideas of them? Let us endeavour to distinguish them. It would doubtless be better to inspire Sentiments, in treating a Subject which is not confined to Speculation; but it is notwithstanding useful to clear up and fix the Principles of our Duties. There are a great many Occasions wherein Practice depends on our own Light.

Probity is the Observation of the Laws. But besides the Laws which repress Attempts against politick Society, there are Sentiments, and Proceedings in Use, which secure and soften civil Society, and the particular Commerce and Intercourse of Men; the Observation of which, is so much the more Indispensable, as it is free and voluntary; whereas the Laws have provided for their own Execution. Whoever has no more Probity than is required by them, is a dishonest Man.

The Laws countenance, and fall in with our Weakness and Passions, and repress only what openly attacks Society; if they had entered into a Detail of all that can affect it indirectly, they could not be universally understood, nor consequently followed; there must have been too many Transgressors, whom it would have been unjust, and often difficult, to chastise, considering the Proportion that ought always to be between Faults and Punishment.

In Proportion as Men were polished and enlightened, those, whose Minds were the most inclined to Honesty, have supplied the general Laws, in establishing, by a tacit Agreement, certain Customs, to which Use has given the Force of Law amongst well-bred Men, though there is not, it is true, any Punishment pronounced against the Infringers of them, it is not for this Reason, less real. Contempt and Shame are the Chastisements allotted for them, and the most feeling Punishment to those who are
worthy

worthy to have a true Sense of them. Publick Opinion exercises Justice in this Occasion, marks out the exact Proportions, and makes the most refined Distinctions.

Men are judged according to their State, Education, Situation, or Knowledge. It seems that different Degrees of Probity have been agreed on, and that each Man is only obliged to have the Degree, which is answerable to his Condition ; and can have no other, but what is proportionable to his Judgment and Understanding. Some Men, who being exposed to the Eyes of the Publick, can serve as Examples, are treated with more Severity than others, whose Fate it is to be in Obscurity. The less is required of a Man, from whom a great deal should be expected, the greater Injury is done him. As to what regards the Customs I mentioned, one is very near Contempt that pleads a Right to Indulgence.

The Opinion of the Publick, being itself the Punishment of the Actions it judges, cannot but use Severity on the Things it condemns. There are some Actions whose Proof consists only in Suspicion, and whose Punishment in their Notoriety.

It is surprising, that this Opinion, so severe on simple Proceedings, does not extend itself to Crimes, that belong to the Laws : which do not become truly shameful, but by the Punishment that follows them.

There is no Maxim more false in our Manners, than that which says, that *Crimes are infamous, not the Scaffold*. This indeed should be so ; yet we reinstate ourselves in our former Reputation, when our Crimes pass unpunished ; but let it not be said, we do so, because Punishment denotes them, and gives alone a sufficient Proof of them.

Men are more rash, than circumspect in their Judgments, but are really moved only with material and sensible Facts. This is so true, that a Crime proved by Pardon, disgraces and dishonours less than Punishment. We observe it chiefly, in the Injustice and Oddness of that cruel Prejudice which reflects Disgrace and Ignominy on those, whom the Tie of Blood unites to a Criminal ; so that perhaps it is less unhappy to be related

to one, whose Crime is notorious, but not punished, than to an unfortunate Man, whose Innocence was found out after his Punishment.

I have, I think, observed another Sort of Oddness in the Application of this Prejudice. Children are oftener reproached with the Infamy of their Fathers, than Fathers with that of their Children. Yet it seems to me, that a contrary Behaviour would be less unjust. For then Fathers would be punished for not rectifying the bad Inclinations of their Children, by a suitable Education; if we think otherwise, is it through a Sentiment of Compassion for old Age, or the barbarous Pleasure of poisoning the Life of those, who only begin their Career?

To clear up, in fine, what concerns Probity, it is necessary to know, whether Obedience to the Laws, and the Practice of usual Behaviour are sufficient to constitute an honest Man. When we reflect seriously on this Question, we find they are not sufficient for perfect Honesty. One can have a Sort of Probity that screens and secures him from the Reproaches of Men, at the same Time that he has a hard Heart, a mischievous Will, a savage Character, and low Sentiments; occasioned either by Interest, Education, Pride or Fear.

But there is a Judge more clear-sighted, more severe and just, than either Laws or Manners; it is our interior Sentiment, called Conscience.

The Laws not having pronounced Judgment against Faults more grievous in themselves, than a great many that have been condemned; and Manners not having taken in all that the Laws have omitted; it is happy for Men, that each of them has in his Heart a Judge, that protects and excuses others, or condemns himself.

How many Things are there, tolerated by Manners, which are more dangerous than what they proscribed? Should Satyr, or even a Jest that comes from a Superior, (which sometimes gives an irreparable Wound to him who is the Object of it,) be judged an innocent Thing? or a gratuitous Succour refused him through Neglect, whose Fate depends upon it; together with
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So many other Faults, which we all feel and forbid ourselves so little ?

These however, are Things which exact Probity should prohibit, and of which our Conscience is an infallible Judge. There are also many Things condemned by the Laws, which Manners tolerate.

I do not pretend to speak like a religious Man : The Institution of Religion is the Perfection, not the Basis of Morality ; nor like a subtle Metaphysician, but a moral Philosopher, who is supported by Reason, and proceeds only by Argument. I need not therefore, examine whether this Conscience is, or is not an innate Sentiment, it is enough, if it be an acquired Light ; and that the narrowest Conceptions have more Knowledge of Justice or Injustice, from their Conscience ; than they could have learned from Laws or Manners.

This Knowledge is the Measure of our Obligations : We are bound, with Regard to others, to all, we believe, we have a Right to expect from them. Men have a Right to expect from us, not only what they look upon as just, but also, what we ourselves esteem so ; though they neither required or foresaw it : Our Conscience forms the Extent of their Right.

The greater our Knowledge is, the more Duties have we to discharge ; if our Mind does not inspire us with these Sentiments of Duty, it suggests at least, the Manner of proceeding, and demonstrates the Obligation we lie under to satisfy them.

There is another Principle of Intelligence that regards this Subject, which is superiour to Wit itself ; it is Sensibility of Soul, which gives a Sort of Sagacity in praise-worthy Actions, and goes further than the Penetration of Wit alone.

We can say, that the Heart has Ideas, which are proper to itself ; we may observe between two Men, whose Minds are equally penetrating, profound, and extended on Subjects purely intellectual, what a Superiority he gains, who has Sensibility of Soul, when Subjects belonging to it are treated.

How many Ideas are there, which cannot be attained by those who have not a certain Warmth of Heart ?

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This Warmth joined with Vivacity, makes sensible Souls fall into some Faults, which others do not commit ; but they are by far the most preferable, on Account of the Abundance of Good which they produce.

Sensible Souls have more Existence than others ; Good and Evil are multiplied in their Regard. They have besides, a very great Advantage in Society, by being persuaded of the Truths, which the Mind is only convinced of. Conviction is often passive, Persuasion always active. It is the Mind alone, that can, and ought to form a Man of Probity ; and it is Sensibility forms a virtuous Man. This I shall explain in the following Manner.

Whatever the Laws require, Manners recommend, and Conscience inspires, are all united in this Axiom, so well known, and so little cleared up. *Do not to another, what you would not have done to yourself.* The exact and precise Observation of this Maxim forms true Probity. *Do to another, what you would have done to yourself.* This is Virtue.

At first Sight, it appears, that Lawgivers were covetous and narrow-minded Men, who having no need of others, were only solicitous to prevent Harm to themselves, and dispensed themselves from doing any Good: This Idea appears the more probable, as the first Legislators were Princes, Chieftains, those in a Word, who had the most to lose, and the least to gain. Wherefore the Laws are confined to Prohibitions : Yet when we reflect on their Conduct, we find, that they have acted in this Manner, through Wisdom. Manners have gone farther than the Laws, and both arose from the same Principle ; even Conscience itself is kept within the Bounds of inspiring a Repugnance to Evil. Virtue being superior to Probity, requires that Good should be done, and inspires the Desire of it.

Probity forbids, and Virtue commands ; Probity is esteemed, and Virtue respected ; Probity consists almost in Inaction, Virtue acts. Gratitude is due to Virtue, but not to Probity ; because a Man of Understanding, had he no other Object in View, but his Interest, can have no surer Means of attaining it than Probity.

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I am not ignorant of the Objections which may be drawn from happy Crimes ; but I know likewise, that there are different Degrees of Happiness ; and that the Probability of Danger and of Success, should be valued and compared with the Happiness that is proposed ; and that there is no Happiness, even where our Hopes are the best grounded, can countervail the Loss of Honour, or even the Danger of losing it. Thus in judging such a Question, only by Computation, it will appear, that Honesty is always the best Choice that can be made. It would not be difficult to give a moral Demonstration of this Truth ; but there are Principles, which should not be called into Question. It often happens, that the most evident Truths contract by their Examination, a problematical Air, which they never should have.

Virtue is lodged in the Heart ; it is a Sentiment, an Inclination to Good, a Love of Humanity ; it bears the same Proportion, with Regard to good and laudable Actions, that Vice does to Crimes ; it is the Relation of the Cause to the Effect.

In distinguishing Virtue and Probity, in observing the Difference of their Nature, it is moreover necessary, (in order to know the just Value of each) to give Attention to Persons, Times and Circumstances.

There are some Men whose Probity deserves more Praise than the Virtue of others. Should we expect only the same Actions from those, whose Means are so different ? Shall one Man in the Bosom of Wealth and Plenty, have only the same Duties and Obligations with another, who is besieged on every Side, with all Sorts of Want ? This would not be just ; Probity is the Virtue of the Poor ; Virtue should be the Probity of the Rich.

Some Actions are attributed to Virtue, wherein it has no share. A Service offered out of Vanity, or promised out of Weakness, does but little Honour to Virtue ; in this Case, Probity requires its being fulfilled.

When we raise a Man of our Name from an unhappy Situation, wherein we might have shared his Shame ;

is it Generosity that prompts us to it? It is at most, but Decency, or perhaps Pride.

On the other Hand, we praise and ought to praise Acts of Probity, built on a Principle of Virtue. If a Man restores what was committed to his Trust, which no other Person knew any Thing of; in this he does but his Duty, because to do otherwise, would be a Crime; his Action notwithstanding does, and ought to do him Honour. It is thought, that he who does not commit evil, in certain Circumstances, is capable of doing the Good they require. Nothing but Virtue in a simple Act of Probity deserves to be praised.

If an unfortunate Man, pressed with Wants, humbled with the Shame of his Misery, resists the most critical Occasions. If a Man in Prosperity forgets not that there are unhappy Men, if he enquires after them, and prevents their Desires; I esteem and praise both these Men, but admire the first.

The Praises that are given to some Degrees of Honesty and to some Virtues, serve only to condemn the most Part of Mankind. Yet they should not be refused; nor should we go back, and inspect too narrowly and severely into the Principles of Actions, when they tend to the Good of Society. It is a wise and advantageous Method to encourage Men to good Actions: They are capable of following the Maxims of Virtue, as well as of Vice.

Virtue is acquired by the Glory there is in practising it. If we begin out of Self-Love, we continue in it out of Honour, and persevere out of Habit. Let a Man the least inclined to Benevolence, do, by Chance, or by an extraordinary Effort, a generous Action; he will feel afterwards, an inward Satisfaction arising from it, which will make a second Action of the like Nature, easier to him; soon after he will undertake a third, of his own Accord, so that Goodness will, by Degrees, become habitual to him, and make up his Character. We contract the Sentiment of Actions that are often repeated.

Besides, tho' we had a Mind to refer virtuous Actions to a System of Wit and Conduct, rather than to Sentiment; the Advantage of those who practise them

would

would be equal, and their Glory which in this Supposition, we would be desirous to undervalue, would not perhaps be lessened by it. Happy Alternative that forces the Admiration of censorious Men, for Want of their Esteem !

Besides Virtue and Probity, which ought to be the Principles of our Actions, there is another worthy of our Examination ; I mean Honour : It differs from Probity, not perhaps from Virtue ; but rather gives it a Lustre, and seems to me to be an additional Quality.

A Man of Probity is guided by Education, by Custom, Interest or Fear. A virtuous Man acts with Goodness.

A Man of Honour has noble Thoughts and Sentiments. It is not the Law he obeys ; nor is he directed by Reflection, much less by Imitation ; he thinks, speaks and acts with a Sort of Assurance and Haughtiness, and seems to be his own Law-giver.

We are freed from the Laws by Power, we withdraw ourselves from them by Credit, and elude them with Address ; the Want of Sentiment is made up ; that of Manners is supplied with Politeness ; and Virtue is imitated by Hypocrisy. Honour is the *Instinct* of Virtue, and forms its Courage. It does not examine, it acts without Disguise, very often without Prudence, and is a Stranger to Timorousness, or false Shame, which stifle so many Virtues in weak Minds ; for weak Characters lie under the double Inconveniency of not being able to answer their Virtues, and of serving as Instruments to the Vices of all those, who govern them.

Though Honour be a natural Quality, it unfolds itself by Education, is sustained by Principles, and fortified by Examples. We cannot therefore awaken the Ideas, renew the Sentiment, or raise the Advantage and Glory of it too often ; nor attack every Thing, that can prejudice it.

Reflections on this Subject, can serve as Preservatives against the Corruption of Manners, which slacken every Day. My Intention is not to renew the Reproaches, which, at all Times, have been made against every Age Men lived in ; the Repetition of which, would make

us believe, they are not better grounded at one Time, than at another. I am persuaded there has been always a Distribution of Virtues and Vices pretty near equal; but they might have been unequally shared, at different Times between one Nation and another. There are Ages more or less famous; and ours does not appear to be the Age of Honour.

We are not certainly now, as nice and scrupulous in maintaining our mutual Ties as heretofore. When a Man was formerly engaged in any Proceedings that were tolerated by the Laws, but condemned by Honour; the offended Person was not the only one who resented them, every generous Man took his Part, and did him Justice by a publick and general Contempt of his Adversary.

Now a days, those who are the most cried down, have some regard paid them, even without a View of Interest. I have not, you are told, Reason to complain of them personally, why should I therefore repair the Harm done? What Weakness! By this Method, we shew how little we understand the Interest of Society, and consequently our own. If all honest Men resolved to make this a common Cause, their Confederacy would be very strong. When Men of Wit and Honour understand each other, Fools and Knaves act but a very indifferent Part. There are no others, unhappily, but Knaves, that conspire and form an Alliance together; honest Men must stand by themselves.

Formerly some Actions were concealed, which made those who committed them blush, if they happened to be discovered. At present they are committed openly, and consequently must be in greater Number, whereas Constraint and Shame kept a great many Men within Bounds.

I know no Vice but cheating at Cards, that is more cried down in our Age, than in the last. And yet we see Men suspected of this Practice well received. The only Justice which is done, in this Case, is to make use of a great deal of Politeness and Evasions, in order to excuse our not playing with them; which Behaviour less resembles Contempt than Precaution. But a Man
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of the World, whose Conduct is irreproachable in this, and in the Point of Bravery, is deemed a Man of unquestionable Honour. Though he should profess himself your Friend, have no Dispute with him, or Interest, Ambition or Self Love. If he only fears to lessen his Credit, by making use of it, he will certainly fail you on an essential Occasion, and be blamed by nobody for it. You think you have a Right to reproach him, but he is more surprized, than confounded at it; and remains still a Man of Honour. He cannot conceive, how you can look upon a simple Overture of Politeness, as an Engagement; this Politeness so much recommended, saves us often from Baseness, it would be happy for us, it had only palliated some mean and undesigning Actions.

There are certainly some Actions so blameable in themselves, that whatever Interpretation is given them, it cannot justify them; or make them even equivocal. A Man of a gay airy Temper finds out the Secret of avoiding the Dishonour attending such Actions, if he has Courage enough to be the first to publish them himself, and to banter those, who are tempted to blame him; we dare not reproach him, when we see he glories in them. His Boldness is his Justification, and by reproaching him we only expose ourselves to Ridicule, which we dare not do. Thus, we begin to doubt whether he be really in the Fault, and fear we may be so ourselves. In the ordinary Way of thinking to foresee an Objection is to refute it; without being obliged to answer to it; and in what regards Manners, to prevent a Reproach is to destroy it.

A Man who has deceived another, in the most cunning, artful, and criminal Manner, far from having any Remorse or Shame for it, on the contrary applauds himself for his Address; he keeps it private in order to succeed, not for having succeeded; and imagines only, he has won a good Game at *Chefs*, whilst another who is cheated by him, believes he has lost through his own Fault, and only blames himself. Resentment is now become too noble a Sentiment; scarce do we think ourselves worthy to hate, and Vengeance is no more

than an useful Revenge, which is employed, as a Means to succeed, and on Account of the Advantage that results from it.

This Manner of thinking, this Neglect of Manners disparages even those whom it does not dishonour, and becomes more and more dangerous for Society. Those who can pretend to the Glory of giving Example by their Rank and Knowledge, seem to have too little Respect for Principles, even when they do not violate them. They are not sensible that not only their Actions, but also the Fickleness of their Discourse, and the Sentiments they shew, are the Example they give. The Vulgar having no Principles for Want of Education, have no other Curb but Fear, and no Guide but Imitation. It is in the middle State of Life, that Probity is as yet, in the highest Esteem.

This Depravation of Manners does not however hinder Virtue and Honour from being much boasted of; those who have the least of either, know how necessary it is for them, that others should not be so. Men would have been ashamed formerly, to advance certain Maxims, if they had contradicted them by their Actions: Their Discourse formed a Sort of Prepossession in Favour of their Sentiments. At present, Discourses are of such little Consequence, that a Man may be told sometimes, he has a great deal of Honesty, though he should himself speak in Praise of it. Good Discourses however, can be always useful to Society; but we do not truly do ourselves Honour, or make ourselves worthy of talking in such a Strain, but by our Conduct. This is a new Engagement, which we should not be afraid to make, whereas it is useful to acquit ourselves of it.

It is said, that formerly there reigned amongst us a Sort of fanatick Honour, and this happy Madness is attributed to a barbarous Age. It were to be wished, it was renewed in our Time; the Light we have acquired, would serve to regulate this Infatuation, without lessening it. Besides no Excess on this Head is to be apprehended; Probity has its Limits, and it is much if it reaches to the most Part of Mankind; but Virtue and Honour

Honour can extend and raise themselves to an infinite Degree; their Bounds may be always removed farther off, but are never surpassed.

C H A P. IV.

On Reputation and Fame.

MEN are destined to live in Society, and are moreover obliged to it, as they want each other: In this Respect, they are in a mutual Dependence. Nor are they bound only by material Wants; they have a moral Existence, which depends on their reciprocal Opinions.

There are but few Men, who are sure and satisfied enough with the Opinion they have of themselves, to be indifferent about that of others; nay there are some, who are more uneasy about it, than the Wants of Life.

The Desire of obtaining and preserving a Place in the Esteem and Opinion of Men, has given Birth to Reputation and Fame, two powerful Springs of Society, which arise from the same Principle, but whose Means and Effects are not altogether the same.

A great many Means serve equally for Reputation and for Fame, and only differ in the Degrees; others are exclusively fit for one or the other.

An honest Reputation is within the Reach of most Men: It is obtained by social Virtues and the constant Practice of our Duties. This Kind of Reputation is neither shining or extensive, but it is often the most useful.

Wit, Talents, and Genius procure Celebrity, which is the first Step towards Fame; but the Advantage of it, perhaps is less real than we imagine. Whatever is truly useful to us, costs us but little; rare and shining Things are those which require the most Labour and Pains, and whose Enjoyment is purely ideal.

There are two Sorts of Men proper for Fame. The first, who make themselves illustrious, have a Right to it: Others, that is to say, Princes are made subject and tied down to it: They cannot escape Fame. We equally

qually remark the tallest Man in a Crowd, and him, who stands on a rising Ground : And we distinguish at the same Time, whether the Superiority of the one over the other, comes from the Person, or the Place he is situated in. Such is the Relation and Difference between great Men and Princes, who have no other Merit but their Title.

But let us pass this Crowd of Princes by, without preferring them to, or excluding them from this Title ; and let us only consider Fame, with Regard to Men, who have a personal Claim to it.

The Qualities which are solely proper for Fame, appear with Lustre. Such are the Qualities of Statesmen, destined to form the Glory, Happiness or Misfortune of a People.

Some of the Talents required for Fame, would be useless, and sometimes dangerous in private Life. There have been some great Men, whom if some happy Circumstances had not made so, they would perhaps, have been ever judged incapable of any great Action.

Reputation and Fame may be very different, and yet subsist together.

A Statesman should neglect nothing to acquire a good Reputation ; but he can depend only upon Fame, which alone can justify and secure him in the Assaults made against his Reputation. He is answerable to the World, but not to blind, rash, or self-interested Persons.

Not but that one can merit at the same Time, a great Fame, and a very bad Reputation ; but Fame sustained chiefly on Facts, is commonly better grounded than Reputation, whose Principles can be equivocal. Fame is constant and uniform ; Reputation is seldom or never so.

The Reasons that great Men may have to console themselves on the Injustice done to their Reputation, should not induce them to sacrifice it lightly to their Fame, because they reflect a Brightness and Lustre on each other. When one is forced to sacrifice his Reputation, on Account of some hard Circumstances attending his State, it is a Misfortune he must be sensible of,
and

and requires all the Courage, the Love of publick Good can inspire. One must love Humanity in the most generous Manner, to serve it at the Expence of Reputation; or else he must despise Men too much, by having no Regard for their Judgments; would he in this Supposition serve them? When the Sacrifice of Reputation to Fame is not forced by Duty, it is a surprizing Folly, because Reputation is more really enjoyed than Fame.

Friendship, Esteem, Respect and Consideration are only paid us by those we live with; it is therefore more advantageous to have a good, than an extensive Reputation.

If an illustrious Man appears amongst those, who without knowing him personally, set forth his Praises in his Presence, he doubtless must enjoy his Character with Pleasure; and if he is not tempted to discover himself, it is because he has it in his Power, and gives free Play to his Self-Love. But if it was absolutely impossible for him to make himself known, his pleasure being no longer free, perhaps his Situation would be painful to him; and would be almost the same, as if he heard another's Praises, not his own. The like Reflection may be made on the contrary Situation of a Man, whose Name is in Contempt, of which he is supposed to be an unknown Witness: He enjoys in the Midst of his Torment, a Sort of Consolation arising from the Relation opposed to the Pain of the first, whom we have supposed obliged to Silence.

If Celebrity was reduced to its intrinsic Value, it would lose a great many Followers. The most extensive Reputation is always limited; even Fame is never universal. To consider Men numerically, how many are there, who never heard *Alexander's* Name mentioned? This Number far exceeds those, who know he was the Conqueror of *Asia*. How many Men are there, who were ignorant of *Koulikan's* Existence, at the Time he changed one Part of the Face of the Earth?

The Earth has narrow Bounds, and Fame can ever extend itself, without ever reaching them. What a

Character of Weakness it is, to be able to grow for ever, without ever attaining a limited Term !

At least we imagine, that the Admiration of knowing Men can compensate for the Ignorance of others. But what Fame chiefly consists in, is in counting and multiplying of Votes, not in appretiating them ; and in this Case, it seems, that the Fruit of Fame is limited to the Homage paid to the Syllables of a Name : Yet a great many spare neither Pains nor Labour, to arrive at it ; and if they fail becoming illustrious, they endeavour at least to make themselves famous ; they have a Mind to be talked of, and like rather to be unhappy, than obscure. The Man, whose Misfortunes draw the Attention of the publick on him, is half consoled.

When the Desire of Celebrity consists in Sentiment, it can be, according to its Object, estimable in him who experiences it, and useful to Society ; but if it be Extravagance or Madness, it soon becomes unjust, artful and disparaging by the Practices it makes use of : Pride is the Cause of as much Baseness as Interest. This is what produces so many tottering and usurped Reputations.

Nothing can make us more indifferent about Reputation, than to observe in what Manner it is often established, how it destroys itself, how it varies, and also to observe the Authors of these Revolutions.

Scarce can a Man appear in any Career whatsoever, let him shew never so few happy Dispositions, and even sometimes without them, but every one is eager to serve, to usher him in, and exalt him : It is always in the Beginning, that a Man is a Prodigy. Whence proceeds this Eagerness ? Is it caused by Generosity, Goodness or Justice ? No, it is Envy, which does not appear so, even to those whom it excites. In every Station, there are always some Men of superior Talents, Subalterns who cannot themselves aspire to the first Places, endeavour to remove others from them, by raising and encouraging Rivals.

It may be said perhaps, that those who cannot attain to the first Places, are indifferent about the Persons that fill them. But we understand very little of the Nature

of Passions, when we make them reason thus: They are swayed by Motives, but never by Principles.

Envy feels and acts, but neither reflects or foresees: As soon as it succeeds in its Undertaking, it endeavours to destroy its own Work. We endeavour to pull him down, whom we have helped to rise; and we think it unpardonable in him, to have no further Need of our Assistance.

Thus Reputations are formed and destroyed. Sometimes they are maintained, either by the Solidity of the Merit, which supports them, or the Artifice of those, who being raised by a Faction or Cabal, know better than others, the Springs that make them move, or stop their Progression.

It often happens that the Publick is surprized at some Reputations, it has raised itself; it enquires into the Cause, and not being able to discover it, (as it has no Existence,) it conceives greater Admiration and Respect for the Phantom it has created. These Reputations are like Fortunes, which having no real Foundation are supported on Credit, and make the greater Figure for it.

As the Publick raises Reputations by Caprice, so particular Men usurp them by Intrigue, or a Sort of Impudence, which should not be dignified with the Name of Self-Love. They proclaim their own Merit: We at first, laugh at their Claim to it; but they repeat the same Discourses so often, and with so much Assurance, that, at length, they gain their End, and impose it upon us. We forgot where we first heard it, and at last, believe it; it is repeated like the confused Noise of a City, which is never examined into.

Even Associations are formed for such Practices, which are called Cabals.

Some undertake on Purpose, to raise a Reputation, and succeed in their Attempt.

Let such a Reputation be never so shining, the Person who is the Subject of it, is frequently the only one deceived in it. Those who have created it, know what Value to put on it; though it often happens, that some of them finish, by respecting their own Work.

Others,

Others, struck with the Contrast of the Person and the Reputation, and finding nothing that can justify the publick Opinion, do not dare to express their own Sentiments. They acquiesce in the Falsehood out of Timidity, Complaisance or Interest; so that it is no rare Thing, to hear a Number of People repeat the same Discourses, who disavow them in their Hearts. Men for the most Part, do not dare to blame or praise alone; and are not less timorous in protesting, than in attacking; there are but few who have Courage enough, not to want Partizans or Accomplices, I do not say in order to make their Sentiments known, but to persist in them; they endeavour to strengthen themselves in their own Opinions, by suggesting them to others, which if they cannot compass, they abandon them.

However it be, usurped Reputations which produce the greatest Illusion, have something ridiculous in them, that should hinder their being too much prized. Yet the same Practices are pursued, even by those, who have Merit enough, not to want them.

When Merit serves as a Foundation for Reputation, it is very ill judged to join Artifice to it; because it hurts more the Reputation we have already acquired, than it serves that, which we are ambitious of. If the Publick finds it out, and it finds such Tricks out at the End; it revolts, and degrades the best acquired Glory. This is an Injustice; but the Publick should not have a Right to become unjust. Envy, to which the slightest Pretexts are sufficient, applauds itself, for having such Motives; and lays hold on them with Ardour. Envy never pardons Merit, but when it is deceived by its own Malignity; and believes it finds out Faults it can feed on. It consoles itself with pulling down on one Side, what it is forced to admire on the other; nor is it so desirous to destroy, what it has Hopes of injuring and reviling.

A Sort of Indifference about our own Merit, is the surest Prop of Reputation; we should not affect opening the Eyes of those, who are dazzled with Light. Modesty is the only Lustre, that is allowed to be added to Glory.

Though

Though Artifice be a shameful Means of acquiring a Reputation, yet there is an Art, and even a laudable Art, that grows from Prudence and Wisdom, which is not to be rejected. Men of Wit have more Advantages than others, not only in what regards Glory, but also in acquiring and deserving a virtuous Reputation. A refined Understanding, is as contrary to Falsehood, as to Imprudence; a sure and quick Discernment, know how to make a proper Choice of Favours; and are the Cause why we speak, are silent, and act opportunely. There is no Man but what has, at some Time, an Occasion of doing a good and courageous Action, and that, without Danger. But a Fool slips the fairest Opportunity, for Want of perceiving it: A Man of Wit feels it, and lays hold on it. Experience proves that Wit alone is not sufficient for it; it also requires a noble undaunted Heart.

I saw some of these shining Successes; and am persuaded, that the very Person who was loaded with Praises, felt how little it cost him to obtain them; but this did not lessen his Worth.

I have observed others, whose Hearts were full of Kindness and good Will, and who practiced the most frequent Acts of Virtue; yet for Want of understanding, and *timing* their Actions, they were not near as much esteemed as they deserved. Their Merit raised no Sensation; scarce was it suspected. It is true, that if by some lucky Accident, simple and uniform Merit comes to be remarked, it acquires a sudden Lustre: It is praised with Complacency, and every one is willing to augment it. Even Envy applauds it, without belying her Character, and draws an Advantage from it, by humbling others.

Since Reputations are formed and destroyed with so much Ease, it is not surprizing they vary, and are often contradictory in the same Person. Such a one has a Reputation in one Place, which in another is quite different: He has that he deserves the least; and is refused that he has the greatest Right to. We see Examples of it in every Order. I cannot forbear here entering into
a Detail,

a Detail, which will clear up these Principles, by the Application I shall endeavour to make.

A Man is taxed with Avarice, because he despises Ostentation, and denies himself whatever is superfluous, in order to help some unhappy Men, whose Misery is not publickly known. The Generosity of another is praised who squanders away with vain Glory, what he gets by Artifice or Violence; he makes Presents, but refuses at the same Time to pay his Debts: His Magnificence is admired, when he is at once the Victim of Pageantry and Avarice.

The Insolence of another is blamed, who does not yield with Baseness to usurped Authority: Another's Anger is condemned, because his Patience did not sink to Abjection. As Patience has its Bounds, Men who are naturally mild and peaceable, when their Measure is filled, are often unseasonably in the wrong. We cannot believe of what Importance it is for the Good of Peace, not to suffer ourselves to be too much oppressed, unless we consent to be vilified.

On the contrary, the Mildness of a stubborn Man is much boasted of, who is obstinate by Character, and polite through Pride.

One Woman is dishonoured, because she published her Fault by the Greatness of her Grief and Shame; whilst another secures herself from Reproaches, by the Excess of her Impudence; Nor is she the Object even of secret Contempt. Men hate what they dare not punish; but they despise only what they dare blame openly. Their Actions determine more their Judgments, than their Judgments regulate their Actions.

If we pass from private Men to those, who appearing on a more elevated Theatre, can the more easily be known; we shall find, that they are judged with as little Mercy and Justice.

A Minister is accused of Hard-heartedness, because he is just. rejects Sollicitations that are *paid*, and refuses to agree to what Courtiers call *Affairs*. This Traffick is injurious to Merit, scandalous for the Publick, disparaging to Authority, and dangerous for the State.

A Prince

A Prince is reckoned severe, because he loves rather to prevent Faults than be obliged to punish them ; he is deemed cruel, because he suppresses subaltern Tyranny the most odious of all. The Laws that are most severe against Oppressors are the mildest for Society ; but private Interest is always fond of making itself the Law-giver of publick Order.

Lewis XII. one of the best and consequently the greatest Kings that *France* ever had, was accused of Avarice, because he did not oppress the People, in order to enrich some Favourites without Merit. The People should be the Favourites of Kings, and Princes have no Right to Superfluity, but when the People have what is necessary. The Reproaches they dared to make him, only proved his Goodness. Nay, their Insolence was carried to such a Degree, that he was ridiculed on the Stage. *I like better, said that good Prince, that my Avarice should make them laugh, than if it had made them shed Tears.* The Reproaches of Courtiers are often equivalent to their Praise, and their Praises are nothing else but Snares.

As to what regards Reputations of Honesty, it is surprising that there are so few of them established, considering the Facility with which they are sometimes usurped. Most People were formerly Hypocrites of Virtue, as they are now a days of Vice. Some Men having observed, that austere Virtue is not always exempt from a little Roughness ; because one is not so circumspect, who is irreproachable in his Conduct ; and has not so watchful an Eye upon himself, when he does not fear to be betrayed ; these Men draw an Advantage from their natural Fierceness, and often carry it to Excess, in order to establish the Severity of their Virtues : Their Declamations against Impudence are continual Proofs of their own. How many Men are there, whose Roughness is their only Virtue ! Giddiness is also but a very equivocal Proof of Candour : We should trust only to the Giddiness of those, to whom it is often prejudicial.

Roughness and Giddiness are Faults of Character, which neither absolutely exclude, much less suppose Virtue ; but which spoil it, when they are united with it.

Yet

Yet how many Times have we been deceived by these outward Appearances ?

Though we too easily agree to some Reputations of Probity, yet we destroy others with a more blameable and unworthy Temerity, through Passion or Interest. We shamefully lay hold on the Misfortunes of a Man, in order to attack his Probity, and condemn the Reputation of another, only to raise an Opinion of our own Virtue.

If a Man has Courage enough to vindicate a Reputation, which he thinks unjustly attacked ; he has not always the Honour done him, of being judged a Dupe ; (this Suspicion would be too ridiculous ;) but he is supposed to have some Interest in maintaining so extraordinary a *Thefts*. Let a Man be never so palpably deceived in judging unfavourably, he is only suspected of an Excess of Penetration ; but if his Error lies in judging favourably, his Opinion is looked upon as the Height of Weakness : Yet the Error is the same, though the Character be very different.

These false Judgments do not always proceed from Malice : Men do a great many Injustices without bad Designs, through Levity, Precipitation, Folly, Rashness, or Imprudence. The Decisions which are hazarded with most Confidence, make the deepest Impressions.

Who are they that enjoy the Privilege of pronouncing Judgment ? Men who by the Dint of braving Contempt, acquire at length some Degree of Respect, and set themselves up for Examples. Men who have Opinions, but never have Sentiments ; who change, quit, and return to their Opinions again, without knowing it, nor even suspecting it ; and who are obstinate without being constant.

These however, are the Judges of Reputation ; these are the Men whose Sentiments are despised, and whose Approbation is sought after ; who procure Esteem and Consideration without having any themselves.

Consideration differs from Celebrity ; even Reputation and Fame do not always give it ; and it can be acquired without Grandeur or Shew.

Consideration

Consideration is a Sentiment of Esteem mixed with a Sort of personal Respect, which a Man inspires in his own Favour. We enjoy it equally amongst our Inferiours, our equals, and those who are superiour to us by their Rank or Birth. We can be, with the Advantages of an elevated Station in Life, of an illustrious Family, superiour Wit or Talents, we can be, I say, without Consideration; nor is it annexed even to Virtue, that is alone, and stripped of other Advantages; and still it can be attained without any great Depth of Understanding, and even in Spight of the Obscurity of our Birth or State.

Consideration does not necessarily attend a great Man: A Man of Merit has already a Right to it; he is a Man that is endowed with all the Qualities and Advantages of his State, which he never sullies in any Manner. To give, in fine a more precise Idea of Consideration, it is obtained by the Re-union of Merit, Decency and Respect for one's self.

As Consideration is acquired, so it is also usurped: We see some Men whose Merit is boasted of, but if we examine in what it consists, we are surpris'd at their Emptiness. We find that all this Merit so much bragged of, is confined to an Air, or to an important and self-sufficient Tone of Voice: a little Impertinence is not useless to it; and sometimes their Looks are sufficient. They assume the Carriage of respectable Men, and are for this Reason respected; otherwise they would not be so much as esteemed.

We should conclude from this Analysis we have made, and from the Discussion we have entered into, that Fame is the Reward of superior Talents sustained by great Efforts; that Reputation usurped by Artifice is never sure, and is sometimes shameful; that the most honest Reputation is always the most useful; and that every one can aspire to Consideration in their respective Stations.

C H A P. V.

On great Men.

HAVING considered the Objects that regard Men in general, let us adapt our Reflections to some Classes of Society, and begin by great Men.

A great Man is a Word, whose Reality exists no longer but in History. A great Man was one born a Subject, Illustrious by himself, and within the Reach of the Laws; yet powerful enough not to obey them but freely; which made him often a Rebel with Regard to his Sovereign, and a Tyrant over other Subjects. There are no more of them.

It might have been an Advantage to the People to see these great Men humbled, and lose their Privileges; but it is a greater Advantage to the State, that they have lost them, than if they had preserved them.

If we had a Mind, now to make a List of those, to whom this Title is given, or of those, who arrogate it to themselves, it would be no hard Matter to know where to begin, but it would be impossible to find out precisely where to end. We should come down as far as Burghers, without being able to distinguish the Shade of Separation. All those who go to *Versailles* imagine they go to Court, and belong to it.

The most Part of those who pass for great Men, are only so in the Opinion of the Vulgar, who see them at a Distance. Struck with their exterior Shew, they admire them from afar, without knowing that they have nothing to hope and little more to fear from them. Nor do they know, that in order to become Masters by Accident, they are obliged elsewhere to act in the same Manner, that the common People do in their Regard.

As they are more elevated than powerful, an indispensable and ruinous Pomp puts them continually in Want of Favours; so that it is quite out of their Power to relieve an honest Man, even when they are desirous to do it. In order to have it in their Power, they should keep their Luxury within Bounds; but Luxury admits

of

of no Bounds, but an absolute Impossibility of growing. Nothing but Wants can bear being stinted, in order to help Superfluity.

As to what regards the Fear they may inspire, I know how many contrary Examples can be opposed to my Sentiment, But it is the Error in which we are on this Subject, that multiplies them. Our Fears would vanish, if we considered, that great Men as well as those in the lowest Station, have the same Master; that they are tied down to the same Laws, which are seldom ineffectual, when their Protection is claimed confidently; but this Courage is not ordinary, and a greater Degree of it is required to annihilate an imaginary Power, than to resist a real one.

Men have more Timorousness in their Minds than in their Hearts; and voluntary Slaves make more Tyrants, than Tyrants make forced Slaves.

This is doubtless what distinguishes the Courage of the Mind from that of the Heart, which is a very just Distinction, though it is not always well fixed. It appears to me, that the Courage of the Mind consists in seeing Dangers, Evils, and Misfortunes, precisely as they are; and consequently the Resources and Remedies for them. To see them less than they are, argues a Want of Knowledge; and to see them greater, a Want of Courage. Fear exaggerates them, and consequently makes them grow; blind Courage obscures and disguises, but does not always weaken them, they both hinder us to triumph over them.

The Courage of the Mind often supposes and requires that of the Heart; the Courage of the Heart is only made use of in material Evils, physical Dangers, or those which are relative to them. The Courage of the Mind is applied in all the delicate Circumstances of Life; we often see Men who dare encounter the most evident Danger, but we seldom see any, who do not suffer themselves to sink under Misfortunes; and who know how to draw Means from them, for some happy Success. How many timorous Men are there at Court, who have been Heroes in the War?

To return to great Men; those who are Depositaries of Authority, are not precisely what we understand by them; great Men are obliged to have Recourse to Men in Place. and have often more Need of it, than inferior People, who, condemned to Obscurity, have no Opportunities of suing for Favours, and no Pretensions to expect them.

Not but that there are many great Men who have Credit; but they owe it only to the Esteem they have acquired themselves, to their Services, and to the Want the State has yet of them.

But great Men who are only nominal having no direct Power or Credit, endeavour to partake of it by Art, Cringing, and Intrigue, which are Characters of Weakness. Dignities in fine create little more than Respect; Places give Power.

Though evident these Distinctions may be, it appears that those who live at Court, feel them more than they see them; their Conduct is more conformable to them than their Ideas; for they have no need of Reflection, to know whom it concerns them to please. People of an inferior Rank make no Doubt of their Credit; and in this consists one of the chief Advantages of great Men: By this Means they exact, as a Tribute, all the Services which are paid them with Submission.

It is not only out of Fear that Inferiors hesitate to press them on their Engagements; they are not sure of the Right they have to do it: The Grandeur of a Man imposes upon an unhappy Wretch at whose Expences he was made so; he falls with Respect before the Work of his own Hands, as the Sculptor adored the Marble he made a God of.

It is true, that if this great Man falls into an irreparable Misfortune, the People become his most cruel Persecutors. The Respect paid him was like Adoration, and the Contempt he falls into, is like Impiety; the Idol was only knocked down, and the People reduce it to Powder.

Great Men are so persuaded of the Esteem their Pomp creates for them, even in the Minds of their Equals, that they neglect nothing that can support it. A Courtier is disgraced,

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disgraced, as soon as his Fortune is spent ; this is so true, that he who supports his Dignity, with criminal Resources is more considered, than one who has Greatness of Soul enough, to tie himself down to severe Justice ; but then, when a Man falls, after having drained the most infamous and unjust Resources, he is in the Height of Disgrace ; because there are no Vices generally allowed of, but such as are joined with Misfortunes.

C H A P. VI.

On Credit.

WHAT I have said of great Men gives me an Occasion to examine, what Credit is, its Principles, and its Effects.

Credit is the Use of another's Power ; and is greater or less, in Proportion as this Use is more or less extensive and frequent. Credit argues therefore a Sort of Inferiority, at least relatively to the Power that is employed, whatever Superiority we may have in other Respects.

This is so true, that in speaking of Credit, that of a private Man with a Lord, of a Lord with a Minister ; and of a Minister with a King is bragged of ; and without our Mind's giving any Attention to it, the Idea it has of Credit is so just, that there is no one, who does not think it ridiculous to hear the Credit of one of our Sovereigns mentioned, unless it be the Credit he might have in *Europe*, with other Princes, his Equals, whose Union and Alliance form in his Regard, a Sort of Superiority.

A Prince, whose Power is limited, may have more Credit in *Europe*, than the most powerful and absolute King in his own Dominions. Such a King's Power may alone be an Obstacle to his Credit. In every Age we have had Examples of it ; nay private Men have sometimes had more Credit than their Monarchs.

I shall not enter on this Head, into a Detail that is foreign to my Subject ; I only consider what regards private Men.

Credit

Credit is therefore the Relation that is from Want to Power; whether it be claimed for one's self or another; with this Difference, that to obtain a Favour for another, is Credit; and to obtain it for one's self, is being only protected.

Some Degrees of Credit which are not extremely honourable in their Nature, may be so in their Principles and Effects. The Principles of Credit are the personal Esteem and Consideration we enjoy; the Inclination of which we are the Object; the Interest we offer, or the Fear we inspire.

Credit founded on Esteem, is that which should please us the most; and can be deemed as a Justice paid to Merit. That, which we owe to Inclination, though it be less honourable in itself, is ordinarily surer than the first. Both yield almost always, to Hope or to Fear, that is to say, to Interest; whereas these are two Effects of the same Cause. So that when these different Motives are in Competition, it is easy to judge which of them must prevail.

The two first Motives to Credit are not commonly very powerful. It is against our will, we allow it to Merit. It looks too like Justice, and Self-love is better pleased to bestow Favours. On the other Hand, our Inclination determines us less than we imagine to oblige, though it makes us find Pleasure in it; it is often subordinate to other Motives, which are of more Weight than Friendship, though they are not so good and laudable.

Besides, Men in Place, have but few Friends, nor are they sorry for it. Ambition and Affairs take them up too much, to leave a Place in their Hearts for Friendship; and that we bear them is not unlike Worship. When they seem to open themselves to their Friends, they seek only to unbend their Minds by Dissipation. They are like spoiled Children, who are loved without a Return of Gratitude, and angry at the least Contradiction of their Will or Fancies. It must be allowed, they have frequent Opportunities of knowing Men. of learning to esteem them but little, and to depend less upon them. They know that they are oftner besieged through Interest, than they are courted out of Taste or Esteem, even

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when they are worthy of it. They see the mean and criminal Practices which Competitors make Use of against each other, and judge from their Proceedings, what Value to put on their Attachment. Though Adulation pleases them as much as if it was sincere, yet the Meanness of its Motive does not always escape them; and Experience teaches them, how others like themselves have been deserted in their Disgrace. A little Suspicion is therefore pardonable in Men in Places, and their Friendship should be better grounded than that of others.

Since Merit and Friendship have so small a Share in Credit, it can be nothing else but a Tribute raised for Interest, a mere Bartering which Hope and Fear decide, and of which they are themselves the Exchange. We seldom refuse those we can oblige with Glory, and whose Acknowledgement does Honour to their Benefactors. This Glory is the Interest we receive from it: We refuse others much less, from whom we expect a Return, because this Expectation is a more sensible Interest to the most Part of Mankind; we grant almost every Thing to those whose Resentment we fear, especially if we can hide our Fear under the Mask of preventing their Desires. But if we cannot dissemble the true Motive, we soon take our Resolution. It seems we read in the Hearts of Men, that they approve interiorly the Conduct they would have followed themselves.

No Kind of Fear is so little dissembled as that which certain Men at Court inspire, whose State is despised, but whose domestick Intimacy or Circumstances may make them dangerous. They are treated with such Precaution, as gives Fear an Air of Prudence; for which Reason, no one is ashamed of it, because it seems, our Character cannot be disgraced by a Behaviour which does Honour to our Wit. The Solicitations and simple Recommendations of this Sort of People have more Weight than those of the greatest Lords; and are more taken Notice of, than those of our Friends, especially if they be old Friends, for the later the Date of Friendship is, the more Advantages it has. We do every Thing for those, whom we have a Mind to gain, or bring to an Engage-

Engagement, but nothing for those we are sure of. The Privilege an old Friend has, is nothing more than his being refused the Preference, and obliged to approve the Denial; happy, if through an Excess of Confidence, our Motives are communicated to him.

So many Circumstances concur and cross each other in the Distribution of the least Favours, that it is a difficult Thing to know, how, or by whom they are granted. Hence it happens, that they are often dispensed without Generosity, and received without Acknowledgement; because it happens rarely, that a good Office falls upon Want, and more rarely that it prevents it. We harshly refuse what is necessary, and easily grant what is superfluous; we offer Services, but refuse Succour.

The Effects or Motives of Credit, are Interest, Consideration, and Generosity.

Those who employ their Credit out of a View of Interest are not worthy to pass even for Men of Credit. They are but vile Creatures protected, whose Disgrace is reflected on their Protectors. A Favour which is paid, vilifies him that receives it, and dishonours him that grants it.

When Consideration is the Object we propose to ourselves, we commonly employ our Credit in order to make it known and to give it a Lustre. The Reputation alone of having acquired it is one of the surest Means of strengthening, extending, and even of procuring it; it is in every Shape, so endearing a Reward for it, that a great many Men would sacrifice the Reality for the Appearance. How many Men do we see pestered with Solicitations on Account of a false Reputation of Credit? yet they take special Care not to turn their importunate Sollicitors off, by undeceiving them.

Yet those, who in obliging propose to themselves so trifling an End, ought to be persuaded, that whatever Credit they may have, they cannot render as many Services, as they make Malecontents, who believe they have a privileged Right to their Protection.

It is not impossible for a Man whose Thoughts are taken up with the Desire of Obliging to get a contrary Reputation, because the Number of good Offices done

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to Men can never equal their Wants. There is no kind of Credit that can fully answer the Reputation it procures ; for the least Proofs of Credit multiply Demands. A Man who has often done good Offices out of Generosity, can be deemed disobliging and unkind, because he cannot answer the Demands of every Body that applies to him. It is for this Reason, that Men in Place cannot make Use of too much Humanity in order to soften such Denials as are necessary.

It may be imagined that the Gratitude of those they oblige, ought to be a Consolation to them, and compensate for the Injustice done them by others, whom they were forced to refuse. Yet nothing is more common than to see some Men, who sue for Favours with Eagerness, and often with Baseness, receive them with Indifference, as a Justice done them, and endeavour to make it appear, that they have not made the least Step towards them, and that only their Desires were prevented. This Conduct is not surely the Effect of delicate Gratitude, which leaves to our Benefactors, the Glory of their good Actions.

My Intention is not to disgust Benefactors : I am rather desirous to prevent their Dislike, and to inspire them with noble disinterested Sentiments, the Success of which is never uncertain. When we oblige generously, and seek no other Interest but the Pleasure of obliging, we have in it an infallible Recompence, which the Ingratitude of Men cannot rob us of. But if Benefactors are desirous of Gratitude, let their good Offices be done to Men of Merit, for these only are grateful and acknowledging.

C H A P. VII.

On fashionable Men.

THE *French*, at all Times, have gone through the least Changes in their Character of any People whatsoever. They are found to be the same to Day, they were at the Time of the Crusade, and in going up as far as the *Gauls*, we find also a great Resemblance. This

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Nation has always been lively, gay, generous, brave, sincere, presumptuous, inconstant, over-bearing, and inconsiderate. Their Virtues come from the Heart, and their Vices rise from their Wit. Their good Qualities correcting or countervailing their bad ones, perhaps equally conspire to make them, of all other Men, the most sociable. This is their proper Character, and no bad one, but I fear, that within some Time, they have abused it; they are not satisfied with being sociable, they must also be amiable, and I believe they have mistaken this Abuse for a Perfection, which wants to be proved, that is to say, explained.

The fittest Qualities for Society are Politeness without Falshood; Candour without Rudeness; preventing others Desires without Baseness; Complaisance without Flattery; Regard without Constraint; and above all a Heart inclined to Good; thus the sociable Man is the most excellent Citizen.

An amiable Man, at least, the Man to whom this Title is given now a days, is extremely indifferent about the publick Good, highly desirous to please every Society he happens to be in, either by Taste or Chance. and ready to sacrifice each particular Member of it. He loves Nobody, is loved by no one, pleases all, and is often despised and courted by the same People.

By a very odd Contrast, he is always taken up with others, and satisfied only with himself; he expects his Happiness only from their Opinion, without thinking precisely of their Esteem, which he probably supposes, or whose Nature he is perhaps ignorant of. His immoderate Desire of amusing engages him to sacrifice the absent Friend he esteems the most, to the Raillery of those he makes the least Account of, but who listen to him. As frivolous as he is dangerous, he places almost in good earnest, Slander and Calumny in the Rank of Amusements, without suspecting they produce any other Effects; and what is happy, and at the same Time most shameful in Manners, is, that the Judgment he forms of them happens sometimes to be just.

The particular Ties of a sociable Man are the Bonds that unite him more strongly to the State; those of an amiable

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amiable Man are only new Dissipations, that retrench proportionally his essential Duties. A sociable Man inspires us with the Desire of living with him; and we only like to meet sometimes with an amiable Man. In fine, the Assemblage of Vices, Frivolousness, and Inconveniencies in this Character, is such, that the amiable Man is often the least worthy of Love.

Yet our Ambition to attain to this Reputation becomes every Day a Sort of epidemical Disease: How then is it possible, not to be flattered with a Title that eclipses Virtue and pardons Vice! If a Man be dishonoured to such a Degree, that those who keep him Company are reproached with it, his Companions allow every Accusation against him, nor is it by endeavouring to justify him, they excuse themselves: It is very true, they tell you; *but he is very amiable*. This Reason must be good, or else generally received, for there is no Reply made to it. A Man that sets his Vices off with Gaity and Graces, is the most dangerous for Society; there is Nothing but what such a Behaviour makes supportable, and but what it hinders from being judged odious.

What happens from hence? Every one is desirous of being amiable, and no one cares to be any Thing else; their Duties are sacrificed to it, and I should say the Consideration they have acquired, was it lost by such a Behaviour. One of the most unhappy Effects of this frivolous Madness is the Contempt it inspires us with for our State of Life, and the Disdain of our Profession, for which we are chiefly accountable, and by which we should always seek the first and principal Glory.

A Magistrate looks upon Study and Labour as obscure Cares, which only become Men that are not fit for the polite World. He sees, that those who apply themselves to their Duties, are known only by Chance, when there happens to be Occasion of them; so that it is no rare Thing, to see some amiable Magistrates, who in Affairs of Importance, are less Judges than Solicitors, that recommend to their Collegues the Interests of their Clients.

An Officer of a certain Rank believes that Application to military Affairs is the Business of Subalterns ; thus Posts in the Army, would be no more than Distinctions of Rank, not Employments that require to be discharged.

A lettered Man, who by his Lucubrations could have instructed his Age, and transmitted his Name to Posterity, neglects and loses his Talents for Want of cultivating them : He had it in his Power to be reckoned amongst illustrious Men, but remains only a Man of Wit in Society.

Even Ambition, that formerly was so active, and is always so ardent a Passion aspires no longer at Fortune but by Intrigue and the Art of pleasing. The Principles of an ambitious Man, were not heretofore more just than they are at present ; nor were his Motives more Praise-worthy, or his Proceedings more innocent ; but his Labours might have been useful to the State, and might have sometimes inspired an Emulation to Virtue.

It will doubtless be said, that Society is become by the Desire every one has of being amiable in it, more delicious than it ever has been ; this may be, but it is certain also that the State has lost what Society has gained in this Point, and that the Exchange is no Advantage.

What would be the Consequence, should this Contagion spread throughout all the other Professions ? and this may be apprehended, when we see that it has reached an Order solely destined for Edification, in which, the amiable Qualities of our Days would have been formerly looked upon at least, as indecent.

Amiable Qualities being for the most Part founded on frivolous Things, the Esteem we bear them accustoms us insensibly to Indifference for those that should concern us the most. It seems that what regards the publick Good is foreign to us.

Should a great General or Statesman render the most signal Services to the State, before we hazard our Esteem, we enquire if they be amiable Men, what their Agreeableness consists in, though there are perhaps some Graces, that

that do not always become a great Man to have in a superior Degree.

Every important Question, close Reasoning, and reasonable Sentiment are excluded from these shining and amiable Societies, and rise from the *bon ton*. It is not long since this Expression was invented, and it is already common, without being the better understood. This is what I think of it.

The *bon ton* in those who have the most Wit, consists in talking agreeably of Trifles, without allowing themselves the least Appearance of good Sense, (unless it be atoned for by the Graces of the Discourse) and in transgressing against Reason, when they are obliged to produce it, with as much Care as Modesty required formerly, when it was necessary to express a free Thought. Agreeableness is become so necessary, that even Slander would cease to please, was it deprived of it. It is not enough to hurt, it is necessary above all things to amuse, else the most mischievous Discourse falls back on its Author, more than on him who is the Subject of it.

This pretended *bon ton*, though it be only an Abuse of Wit, still requires a great deal of it; wherefore it becomes a Jargon in Fools, which is unintelligible even to themselves; and as Fools form the greatest Number in every Society, this Jargon has prevailed. It is what we vulgarly call *Humbugging*, a fatiguing Heap of Words without Ideas; a Volubility of Discourse that makes Fools laugh scandalizes Reason, puts modest or timorous Persons out of Countenance, and makes Society insupportable.

This pitiful Strain is sometimes less extravagant, and then it is most dangerous. This happens, when any one is sacrificed without his perceiving it, to the Raillery of an Assembly, and made at the same Time the Instrument and Victim of common Mirth, by the Things which are suggested to him, and the ingenious Concessions which are drawn from them.

The first Trials of this Sort of Wit must have naturally succeeded, and as new Inventions always augment in Perfection, that is to say, encrease in Depravation, when their Principles are corrupted, Malice is now

a Days, the Soul of certain Societies, and has ceased to be odious without even losing its Name.

Malice is at present but a Mode ; the most eminent Qualities were not formerly sufficient to excuse it ; they never could supply Society with as much as Malice takes away from it ; whereas it undermines its Foundations, and is for this Reason, if not the Assemblage, at least the Result of Vices. Malice at present, is reduced to an Art, it serves those for Merit, who have no other, and often raises them to Consideration.

This is what produces such Swarms of little mischievous subaltern Imitators of silly Coxcombs, some of whom are found so harmless, their Character being so opposed to it, that they would have been very innocent good-natured Men, had they followed the Dictates of their Heart, insomuch that I am sometimes tempted to pity them, it costs them so much to do Mischief. Wherefore we see some, who think it too hard a Task to play their Part, and abandon it ; others flattered or corrupted with the Progress they have made, go on with it. The only Persons that have succeeded in this preposterous Contrariety are those, who born with a depraved Heart, a disordered Imagination, false Wit, shallow Brains without Principles, who despising Virtue, and incapable of Remorse, have the Pleasure to see themselves the Heroes of a Society, which they should be the Horror of.

It is a curious Sight enough to see the Subordination that reigns among such as form this Sort of Associations. There is no State where it is better regulated. They commonly signalize themselves on Foreigners, whom Chance has thrown in their Way ; thus Strangers were formerly sacrificed in some Countries, where there bad Fortune forced them to land. But when new Victims are wanting, then a civil War begins. The head Man amongst them maintains his Empire, by sacrificing alternately his Subjects one to another. Whoever is the Victim of the Day, is unmercifully oppressed by all the others, who are overjoyed to drive the Storm off their own Heads ; thus Cruelty is often the Effect of Fear. The Subalterns however make Trials one upon

on another, they endeavour to dart only their keenest Shafts, and would willingly sting their Antagonists without being rude, but as Wit is not always as volatile as Self Love is sensible, they often give each other such abusive Language, that nothing but Experience can hinder its Consequence to be apprehended. If some honourable Medium could be found out between a distrustful Temper, and voluntary Abjection, we should not live with less Pleasure, and should have more Union and mutual Regard.

Things being on the Footing they now are on, whoever is most galled has no right to take any Thing seriously. We give each other, if I may make Use of the Expression, only Challenges of Wit; and we must own ourselves overcome, if we make Use of any other Weapon, for the Glory of Wit is the Point of Honour now a days.

Yet we are surpris'd, that such Societies are not disunited by Fear, Contempt, Indignation or Disquiet. We must hope, that by their Excess, they will at length, turn Malice into Ridicule, and this is the only Means of destroying it. It is observ'd that cool Reasoning is the only Thing that imposes on them, and sometimes puts them out of Countenance.

We may imagine, that the Habit of offending makes those who have contracted it, incapable of bending to the Means necessary for acquiring a Fortune. But it is so far from it, that it is better to inspire Fear than Esteem. Besides Men of false Singularity, whether they are ill-tempered, mischievous, or Misanthropists, succeed perfectly well with those they have Occasion of: the Reputation they have acquired gives a very great Weight to the Attendance they pay; and they descend more easily than is imagin'd to base Flattery. Whoever is the Object of it, does not doubt but his Merit is unquestionable, whereas he forces such Characters to a Style so foreign to them. Flat and exaggerated Adulation is the surest to please. An ingenious and delicate Praise does honour to him that gives it, and an extravagant Elogium pleases him that receives it. He takes the Exaggeration

for the proper Expression, and thinks that great Truths cannot be told with Delicacy.

I must allow, that the Societies of which I speak, are rare ; there is nothing but truly good Company that is more so, which is perhaps, nothing else but a fine Chimera, to which we approach more or less. It is not unlike a dispersed Republick, whose Members are found in every Order, and it is very hard to re-unite them into one Body. However, there is no one but claims a Title to it, in his own Society : I mean that every Body believes it can be found in an Order superior to his own, but never in an inferior Class. The first Magistrates suppose it as well at Court as amongst themselves ; but do not believe it can descend so low as certain Citizens, who in their Turn have Degrees of Pride.

A Courtier without entering into any Composition on this Head, firmly believes that good Company exists only amongst People of his own Rank. It is true indeed, that supposing equal Wit, Courtiers have an Advantage over the Generality of Men, by expressing their Thoughts in better Terms, and in a more agreeable Manner. A Fool at Court talks Nonsense more elegantly than one in the City. It is a Mark of Wit or at least of Education, in an obscure Man, to express himself properly. But in a Courtier it is necessary ; he makes Use of no vulgar Expressions, because he knows none. A Courtier that talks in a low Strain, appears to me to have almost the Merit of a learned Man in foreign Languages. All Talents depend really on our natural Faculties, especially on the Use that is made of them. The Talent of Speech, or rather of Conversation, should be more perfect at Court than elsewhere, whereas we are forced to speak there, and obliged to say nothing : Thus our Phrases are multiplied, and our Ideas retrenched. I have no need, I imagine, to advertise, that I speak only of idle Courtiers, to whom *Versailles* is necessary, and who are useless to it.

It follows from what I have said, that Men of Wit at Court, when they possess the valuable Qualities of the Heart, are those, whose Acquaintance is most amiable ;
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but such Societies are rare. Play serves to ease the genteel Part of the World of the painful Load of Existence; and the Talents which they call sometimes to their Succour, in seeking Pleasure, prove a Void in their Souls, but do not fill it. Such Remedies are useless to those whom their Taste, Confidence and Liberty unite.

The modish Part of the World would doubtless be surprised, if certain Societies of Burghers were preferred to theirs, where if we find not a delicate Pleasure, we find at least a catching Joy, mixed often with a little Rudeness; but it is very happy, that a greater Knowledge of the World has not crept in amongst them, which would serve only to make them more ridiculous, nor would they, if it had, be sensible of it; they have the Happiness to know no other Ridicule, but what is contrary to Reason and good Manners.

As to what regards Societies, if we prescind from some Difference in Expressions, we shall find that the general Class of the polite World, and that of the middle Sort, resemble each other more at bottom than we suppose. We find amongst them the same Broils, the same Void, and Misery. Littleness depends less on Objects than on those who perceive them. As for habitual Converse, Men of the polite World, generally speaking, are neither better nor worse than those of a lower Order. These last neither gain nor lose any thing by imitating them. Excepting the Vulgar, whose Ideas are only relative to their Wants, and who are for the most Part, deprived of them, on other Occasions, the rest of Mankind is every where the same. Good Company is independant of State and Rank, and is only found amongst those, who think and feel, who have just Ideas, and becoming Sentiments.

C H A P. VIII.

On Ridiculoufness, Singularity and Affectation.

Ridiculoufness is like those Phantoms which have no Existence, but for such as believe in them. The more an abstracted Word is in Use, the less the Idea of it is fixed; because every one stretches, restrains, or changes it as he thinks proper; and the Difference of Principles is only perceived by that of Consequences, or by the different Applications which are made of them. If we had a Mind to define the Words we understand the least, we should define those we make the most Use of.

Ridiculoufness consists in clashing with received Customs or Opinions, which are commonly confounded with Reason; yet what is contrary to Reason is Folly, and if it be contrary to Equity, it is a Crime.

Ridiculoufness should not therefore take Place in Things which are indifferent in themselves, and depend only upon Fashion. Dress, Language, Manners, and Carriage are its Province; but it extends its Usurpation to Virtue, and this is the surest Means Envy makes use of, to stain its Lustre. Ridiculoufness is superior to Calumny, which can destroy itself, by falling back on its Author. Clear-sighted Malice does not rely upon the Deformity of Vice; it does it the Honour to treat it as Virtue, and associates Ridiculoufness to it, the better to cry it down. Thus it becomes less odious, and more despised. Ridiculoufness is become the Poison of Virtue and Talents, and sometimes the Punishment of Vice.

It is the Scourge of Men in the polite World, and it is but just, they should have a fantastick Being for a Tyrant. We sacrifice our Lives to our Honour, our Honour often to our Fortune, and our Fortune sometimes to the Fear of Ridiculoufness.

I am not surprized, that some Care is taken to avoid our being exposed to it; whereas it is of so great Importance in the Minds of a great many of those, with whom we are obliged to live. But the extreme Sensibility

bility of some reasonable Men in this Point, ought not to be excused. This excessive Fear has raised Swarms of little Judges of Ridicule, who determine whatever ridiculous Custom is in Vogue, as Tirewomen fix the Modes that are in Fashion. Had they not arrogated the Employment of distributing Ridicule, they would be themselves loaded with it; they are like those Criminals, who make themselves Hangmen, in order to save their Lives.

The greatest Folly of these frivolous Beings, and that they suspect themselves the least of, is, that they imagine their Empire is universal: If they knew what narrow Bounds it has, they would, through Shame, abandon it. The Vulgar do not know its Name, which is all the middling Sort of People understand of it. Amongst the Men of the World, those who are taken up with Affairs take notice, only through Detraction, of this troublesome little Sett of Men, who deal in Ridicule; those even who have had a Share in it, and whom Reason or Age have withdrawn from it, scarce remember it; and illustrious Men are in too exalted a Station to give any Attention to it, did they not deign sometimes to amuse themselves with it.

Though the Empire of Ridiculousness is not as far extended, as those who maintain it suppose, still it spreads too far amongst the Men of the World; and it is surprizing that Characters so airy as ours, should submit to such Slavery, whose first Effect makes our Communication with each other uniform, languishing and tiresome.

The childish Fear of Ridiculousness stifles our Ideas, contracts our Minds, and forms them on one Model; it suggests a Sameness in our Discourses, which are insignificant in their Nature, and tiresome by their Repetition. It seems that the same Spring gives an equal Motion to different Machines, in the same Direction. I see none but Fools that gain by this unaccountable Behaviour, which puts them on a Level with Men of superiour Talents, insomuch as they are all equally confined to a common Measure, to which the meanest Understandings can attain.

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Our Wit is almost equal, when we are tied down to the same Rules ; and these Rules are necessary for those who can shew no Wit without them. They are Liveries given to Footmen, who have no Clothes of their own.

With these fashionable Rules, one can be a Fool with Impunity ; and a Man of a great deal of Wit will be regarded as such, unless he is Master of them : For there is nothing that is less distinguished from Absurdity, than the Ignorance of some trifling Customs. How many Blushes have been caused at Court, for producing a Man with Confidence, who was admired elsewhere, and introduced with an imprudent Presumption ; yet his Introducers were not deceived, but they formed their Judgment of him according to Reason, and he is confronted with Modes.

It is not enough not to expose ourselves to Ridiculousness, in order to get clear of it. Those who deserve it the least, have their Share of it, and often the most respectable Persons, if they are timorous enough to receive it. Some despicable, but bold and daring Men, who understand the ruling Modes, repel and annihilate it better than others.

As it often happens that Ridicule has no determined Object, and then has no Existence but in Opinion, it depends partly on the Disposition of him, for whom it is intended, and in this Case it has Need of his Acceptance. It is made to miscarry, not by repelling it with Force, but by receiving it with Contempt or Indifference, and sometimes with a good Grace ; for it is like the Arrows of the *Mexicans*, which pierce Iron, and are deadened against Armours of Wool.

When Ridicule is most deserved, there is also an Art to render it ineffectual ; it consists in amplifying what has given Room to it. We humble our Adversary by despising the Strokes he would feign strike.

Besides this Boldness in resisting Ridicule imposes upon Men ; who for the most Part, are incapable of esteeming Things but by what they appear to be worth ; where their Contempt ceases, their Admiration begins, and Singularity is commonly the Object of it.

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By what Address does it happen, that the same Thing in a certain Degree, causes Ridicule, and when it is carried to excess acquires a Sort of Lustre? Such is the Effect of characterized Singularity, whether its Principles be laudable or reprehensible.

This can rise only from the Disgust caused by the Uniformity of Character we find in Society. We are so tired of meeting the same Ideas, the same Opinions, the same Behaviour, and of hearing the same Discourses, that we are infinitely obliged to him, who rises out of this lethargick Form.

Singularity is not precisely a Character; it is a simple Manner of Being, that unites itself to every Character, and consists in being ourselves, without our perceiving that we are different from others; for when we find it out, Singularity vanishes; it is a Riddle that ceases to be so, as soon as the Word it signifies is known. When we perceive that we differ from others, and that this Difference does not lie in Merit, we can scarce persist but in the Affectation of it, and then it is Meanness or Pride, which come to the same Thing, and produce Disgust; whereas natural Singularity raises the Relish of Society, and enlivens its Languor.

Fools, who often know what they want, and imagine it is for their not taking Care to acquire it, see the Success of Singularity, make themselves singular, and we can easily imagine, what an Effect this odd Undertaking must produce.

Instead of contenting themselves with being nothing, which suits them so well, they endeavour at all Rates, to become something, and thus make themselves insupportable. Having observed, or rather heard it said, that Men of superior Genius are not always exempt from a little Dash of Folly, they endeavour to invent new Degrees of Folly, and fall into Absurdities.

False Singularity is only a Privation of Character, which consists not only in avoiding to be what others are, but also in endeavouring to be precisely what they are not.

We see some Societies where Characters are distributed as Parts in a Play. One Man makes himself a
Philosopher,

Philosopher, another a Droll, a third a Man of Humour. Such a one makes himself insolent, who before was inclined to be complaisant, but he found this Part was taken up by another. When one is nothing, he has it in his Choice to be any thing he will.

It is not surprising that these cross Purposes fill a Coxcomb's Head ; but we are amazed to find them in Men of Wit. They are observable in those, who born with more Vanity than Pride, believe they dignify their Faults with Singularity, by magnifying them rather than by taking Pains to correct themselves of them. They abuse their own Character, study Nature in order to swerve the more from it, and form a peculiar Nature for themselves. They neither do or say any Thing but in a Manner contrary to Simplicity, and unhappily, when they seek what is extraordinary, they find nothing but what is flat and insipid. Men of Wit themselves are never less so than when they aim at it.

We should be sensible, that when we seek what is natural we never find it ; that Efforts produce Excess, and that Excess discovers the Falshood of our Character. When we act in the Character of a blunt Man, we become fierce ; in that of a lively Man, petulant and hair-brained ; Goodness acted in this Manner degenerates into constrained Politeness, and betrays itself at length by Peevishness : False Sincerity is offensive ; and though it should be carried on for some Time, as it consists only in transient Acts, yet we never can attain to Candour, which is the Principle of it, and consists in a Continuity of Character. It is like Probity ; a great many Acts conformable to it do not make a Demonstration of it, and one Act contrary to it destroys it.

In fine, every Sort of Affectation is unmasked at the End, and then we fall below our real Value. Such a one is looked upon as a Fool, perhaps for having been before taken for a Man of Genius. We do not revenge ourselves by the half, for having been deceived.

Let us be therefore what we really are ; let us add nothing to our Character ; let us only endeavour to retrench what may be troublesome to others and dangerous

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gerous for ourselves. Let us have Courage to withdraw ourselves from the Slavery of Modes without exceeding the Bounds of Reason.

C H A P. IX.

On Men of Fortune.

THERE are too Sorts of Conditions which have a nearer Relation with Society, particularly with Men of the World, than they had formerly; that is to say, Men of Learning and Men of Fortune; but this should be understood only of the most distinguished amongst them. Learned Men signalize themselves by their Reputation and personal Accomplishments; and Men of Fortune by their Ostentation and Wealth. For in every State there are chief Men, a middle Order, and the People.

It is not very long ago since the Receivers of the King's Revenues looked upon Men of Family, as their Protectors, who sometimes were their Masters. The most Part of the Fortunes acquired by the Finances in the last Age, were not gained honestly enough to be boasted of; for this Reason, they became more considerable; the first Profits gave Rise to their Avarice; Avarice increased their Greediness, and these Passions are Enemies to Ostentation: An Habit of Oeconomy scarce ever slackens, and is sufficient by itself, without a Genius or distinguished good Luck, to raise a moderate Fortune, by continual Labour, to immense Sums.

If there happened to be at this Time, amongst these Men of Business, some wise enough to enjoy their Fortunes, they judiciously kept within the Bounds of Conveniencies Pleasures and the Advantages of dumb Riches: They avoided making a Figure which could only excite the Envy of great Men, and the Hatred of the People. If we contented ourselves with what really pleases, we should pass for modest Men.

Those to whom Riches give nothing else but Pride, as they have no other Thing to boast of, have at all Times loved to make a Show with their Fortune; too
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drunk with the Enjoyment of it, to blush at the Means they made Use of, their Pomp was formerly the Height of Folly, bad Taste and Indecency.

This Ostentation of Riches is more commonly the Madness of new Men, whom one Turn of Fortune has suddenly enriched, than of those who have been raised by Degrees. It is an odd Thing enough, that Men place more Vanity in their good Luck than in their Labours. Those who owe their All to their Industry, know how often they have avoided, repaired, and were guilty of Faults: As they cannot boast of the Beginning of their Fortune, they enjoy it with Precaution; whereas others who find themselves suddenly made Beings so different from themselves, think they are Objects worthy of the particular Attention of Chance. They do not know what to attribute it to, and not being able to find out the Reason, they always interpret it to their own Advantage.

Such are the Fortunes, which can be called ridiculous, and were more so formerly than at present, by the Contrast of the Person and of Pageantry misplaced.

Besides, Fortunes gained in the Finances were then little more than a Lottery; but now they are become an Art which has its Method and Principles, like others, or at least a Game mixed with Address and Hazard. We could almost assign the Profits by the Nature of the Affair.

Why should the Finances be contemned? The State ought to have Revenues; it is necessary to charge some People with the Receipt of them, and just they should find their Profit in it, provided their Perquisites are limited; otherwise they become scandalous.

We should cry out only against the Male Administration and Insolence of those who cheat, and punish them in a publick and severe Manner. Thus we ought, in all Stations, to sacrifice those to publick Vengeance, who make us hate Authority by the ill Use they make of it, and who in making Men unhappy by their Excesses, corrupt them by their Example.

It must be confessed, they should attribute the Discredit they are as yet in, less to Oppression than to the Insolence

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Insolence of some amongst them. Can we believe, they are cried down, on Account of the Injustice done to some obscure People, whose Complaints are stifled, whose Misfortunes are not known, and who meet with no Protection from such as exclaim in so indeterminate a Manner against Injustice, even when they know them? It is not Generosity or Justice, that reclaim when we inveigh against these rich Folks, it is Envy that pursues Pageantry.

This ought to inspire rich Men, who were not born to be so, with a reasoned Modesty. They do not rightly conceive what need those even who are most worthy of their Fortune, have also of Art to make it pardonable in them.

Men unhappily are fond of posting up their Happiness; they ought notwithstanding, to perceive that it is very different from Glory, the Publickness of which makes and augments its Existence. Unhappy Men are humbled enough even by the Lustre of Prosperity, must they also be insulted with the Affectation of it?

I am not surpris'd that the People murmur at great Fortunes, which they furnish the Substance of, without ever partaking of them. But Men of Family should esteem them as Estates entailed upon them, and destined as a Compensation for a Patrimony they have perhaps squandered away, without any Advantage to the State. There are but few Fortunes that do not fall to some distinguished Families. A Man of Quality sells a Name which he had not the Trouble to illustrate; and if it had not been for the Traffick that is established between Pride and Necessity, most Part of our noble Families would fall into Obscurity, and by Consequence into Misery. There are many Examples of it in the Provinces. If the Rich were allied only to each other, they must necessarily by the Power of Riches, attain to the Dignities they preserve in other Families: They perhaps will one Time or other make Use of this Secret, unless Courtiers enter into Business. A little Rallery can allay and a great deal of Money dissipate whatever Scruples the first may have, who dare break through this Prepossession.

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However, Men of Family have already lost the Right they had of despising these new raised Men, inasmuch as they are, for the most Part, related to them.

It was formerly an Act of Goodness not to humble these Receivers; now they are allied to the greatest Families, they cannot be despised by them without Injustice and Folly. There are some Men of Quality who have not married below themselves, because Men of Fortune did not esteem them enough, to aspire at an Alliance with them.

All those whose Vanity rises from their Birth are not always worthy to be married below their Quality. It is not every one that has a Right to sell his Name.

If Reasons of Decorum do not repress the Haughtiness of Men of Family with regard to these Receivers, at least those of Interest keep them within Bounds.

By bantering them in their Absence, they shew more Envy against their Fortune than Contempt of their Persons; whereas in their Presence, so much Regard, Distinction and Praises are lavishly paid them. Men of Family flatter themselves that this Conduct can be deemed a Mark of such unquestionable Superiority, that it can grow sociable without any Risque: But no one is Ignorant of the true Motives. Sometimes they permit themselves some little moderate Fits of bad Humour; which Conduct flatters their Inferiors by so much the more, as it resembles the genuine Behaviour of Equality. Those who act this Part, wish, that the disinterested Spectators took it for Haughtiness; but it is not possible, because if their Proceedings seem to produce an Effect contrary to that they wish for, they soften their Temper by Degrees, and take the lowest Methods to bring back a Man ready to be scared. A Sort of Raillery helps them out of their Perplexity, which covers a great deal of Baseness.

If rich Men in fine, think themselves superior to others, are they so much to be blamed for it? Have we not the same Regard, nay the same Respect for them, as for those who are in Places, where it is our Duty to pay them? Men can only judge by outward Appearances; are they therefore ridiculously mistaken, because

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because those who deceive them are basely and artfully perfidious ?

There are but few rich Men, what Wit soever or generous Souls they may have, to whom their Riches do not, at certain Times, give some Fits of imperious Humour, and who at other Times, are not mortified at being only rich, or at being regarded only as such.

Yet they are more useful to Society than they were before, and they acquire a real Superiority over those, to whom they are serviceable. True inferiors are those who receive, and Humiliation is added to it, when the Services are pecuniary. This is what has with Justice placed Beggars below Slaves ; these are in a State of Humiliation, and the others in a State of Abjection. Wherefore those who cringe to Men employed in the Finances are in the Category of Beggars, and more so, when they receive Favours from them, if they pay them with Ingratitude : Then their Meanness has no longer a Name, and augments in Proportion to the Birth and Elevation of the Ungrateful.

Why are we surprised at the Regard which Riches inspire ? It is certain, that they do not constitute real Merit ; but they are the Means of all Conveniencies, of all Pleasures and sometimes of Merit itself. Every Thing that contributes or is thought to contribute to Happiness, is always cherished by Men. It is difficult not to identify rich Men and Riches. Do not exterior Decorations cause the same Illusion ?

If we have a Mind by a philosophical Examen to strip a Man of all the Lustre that is foreign to him, Reason has a Right to do it ; but I see that Humour makes Use of this Privilege oftner than Philosophy.

Besides, why should we not esteem what represents all that we regard ? This is what Riches precisely do amongst us ; there is no Difference but from the Cause to the Effect. The only respectable Thing which Riches cannot give, is an illustrious Birth ; but if it be not supported by Places, Dignities and Power, if in short, it be by itself, it is eclipsed by all that Gold can procure. If we are desirous to have a Right to despise Riches, we must change our Manners.

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There were Times and Places in which Gold was despised, and Merit solely honoured. *Sparta* and *Rome* in its Beginning, furnish us with Examples of it. But if we attend never so little to the Constitution and Spirit of these Republicks, we must conceive, that Gold must have been of no Value amongst them, as it was representative of nothing. They had no Notion of Conveniencies; real Wants do not give us an Idea of those we know; their Imagination was not as yet exercised on Pleasures, those of Nature sufficed; and the greatest Pleasures of this Kind cost but little. Luxury was shameful, so that Gold was useless and despised. This Contempt of it was at the same Time, the Principle and Effect of Moderation and Austerity. The most painful Manner of Living ceases to be troublesome, as soon as it becomes honourable. To noble Souls, great Sacrifices are not always as cruel as they appear to be to vulgar Souls. A certain Sentiment of Fierceness and of Esteem for one's self, raises the Soul and makes it capable of every Thing. Pride is the first of Tyrants or of Comforters.

Such was *Lacedemonia*, such was *Rome* in its Childhood; but as soon as Vice and Pleasures made their Way, all Things, even those which should have been the Præmiums of Virtue, all Things, I say, became venal; Gold therefore was sought after, was necessary, was esteemed and honoured: This is precisely the State, to which we are brought, by our Knowledge, our Taste, our new Wants, our Pleasures, and far-fetched Conveniencies. Though the antient Manners of *Rome* and *Sparta* were revived, perhaps they could not make us more or less happy; but Gold, in this Case, would be useless.

Men have but one determined Propensity, which is their Interest; if it be attached to Virtue, they are virtuous with Ease; but if its Object changes, the Disciple of Virtue becomes the Slave of Vice without changing his Character: The same Colours serve to paint Beauties and Monsters.

The Manners of a People are the active Principle of their Conduct, the Laws are only a Curb to it; they have

have not therefore the same Empire over them that Manners have. We follow the Manners of our Age, but we obey the Laws: It is Authority that makes and abrogates them. The Manners of a Nation are more dear and sacred to it than its Laws. As it knows not their Author, it looks upon them as its own Work, and takes them always for Reason.

Yet we cannot conceive, with what Facility a Prince could change the most depraved Manners of certain Nations and direct them towards Virtue, provided this Project was not published. Such a Revolution would appear to be the Master-piece of Enterprizes; and would be more so by its Effect than by its Difficulty. In Expectation of such a Change, whilst Things are on the present Footing, let us not be surpris'd that Riches procure Consideration. This is shameful, if you will, but it must be so; for Men are more Consequent in their Manners than in their Judgments.

We comprehend commonly in the World amongst the Receivers we mentioned, another Class of rich Men, who pretend with Reason to be distinguished by it. These are Merchants, valuable Men, and useful to the State, who enrich themselves but by procuring Plenty, exciting honourable Industry, and whose Riches prove their Services. They are not met with in Society as frequently as the others, because their Business takes them up, and does not allow them to lose their Time for frivolous Amusements, which are liked as much through Habit as Idleness; and which under the Name of Pleasures, cause Uneasiness as often as they dissipate it.

Though the Finances are carried on in much the same Manner as Trade, yet they are sooner learned and cleared up; the whole Art of Knaves consists in embroiling them. The Science of Trade is less complicated and more combined, less obscure but more extensive, and encreases still more in Perfection. Application to Principles requires a constant Attention; new Accidents require new Measures; the Pains attending Trade are almost continual; whereas the Finances are more limited in themselves, and like a Machine which does not often want the Workman's Hand when it is once put in Motion;

on; they are like a Pendulum which is but seldom wound up.

All the Prejudices arising from our State of Life are not equally false; the Esteem which Merchants have for theirs, is agreeable to Reason, they make no Attempt and receive no Advantage but what the Publick partakes of; every thing authorises them to esteem their Profession. Merchants are the first Spring of Plenty, and the most Part of Receivers are only Channels fit for the Circulation of Money. Though these Channels should be of Brass or Clay, the Matter of which they are composed is indifferent, so their Use be the same.

Merchants do themselves Honour by the Means they make Use of to acquire Riches. The others tend to the same End by the Use they make of their Wealth: This is what has engaged them to produce themselves in the World, where they would have been the only Strangers, if, almost at the same Time, Men of Learning had not been admitted into it.

CHAP. X.

On Men of Letters.

Formerly Men of Letters were quite taken up with Study, separated from the World, and in writing for their Cotemporaries, thought only of Posterity, Their Manners full of Candour and Rusticity had scarce any Relation with those of Society; and the Men of the World less instructed than they are now a days, admired their Works, or rather the Names of the Authors, and did not think themselves worthy of living with them. But the Distance they kept at was occasioned more out of Consideration than Repugnance.

A Taste for Letters, Sciences and Arts has prevailed insensibly, and is come to such a Degree, that those who have it not by Inclination affect it through Fashion. Those therefore who cultivate them were sought for, and have been drawn into the World in Proportion to the Pleasure which was found in their Conversation

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They have gained on both Sides by this Union. The Men of the World have cultivated their Minds, formed their Taste and acquired new Pleasures. Nor have the Men of Letters received less Advantages by it. They have found Protection and Consideration; they have perfected their Taste, polished their Wit, softened their Manners, and acquired Lights in a great many Points, which they could not have drawn from their Books.

Learning does not precisely give a State in Life, but serves in the Place of it to those who have no other; and procures them Distinctions which Men superior to them in Rank cannot always obtain. We do not think it humbles us more to pay Homage to Wit than to Beauty, unless we are in other Respects, in Competition for Rank or Dignity: In such Cases Wit can become the most sanguine Object of Rivality. But when we have an undoubted Superiority of Rank, we receive Wit with Complaisance, and are glad to give a Man of an inferior Order the Prize which we should have disputed with a Rival on other Occasions.

Wit has this Advantage, that those who esteem it prove their own Title to it, or make us believe so; which is much the same Thing for a great many People.

The Republic of Letters is divided into a great many Classes. Learned Men who are also called Men of E-rudition, had formerly great Respect paid them; to them the Renewal of Learning is owing; but as at present, they are not esteemed as much as they deserve, their Number diminishes too much, and it is a Misfortune for Learning: They appear but seldom in the World, which is not at all agreeable to them, nor are they more so to it.

There is another Order of learned Men who are employed in exact Sciences. We esteem them, we know how useful they are and recompence them sometimes; yet their Names are more in Fashion than their Persons, unless they make themselves agreeable by some other Things besides the Merit which causes their Reputation.

Men of Letters the most sought for, are those whom we commonly call fine Wits, amongst whom there is also

to a Distinction to be made, Those whose Talents are distinguished and crowned with Success are soon known and well received; but if their Wit is shut up within the Sphere of Talents, whatever Genius they may be judged to have, the Work is applauded and the Author neglected; another in Society is preferred to him, whose Wit is more varied, of a less determined Application, and more extensive.

The first do more Honour to their Age, but we seek in Society what pleases us most. Besides there is a Compensation for every Thing. Great Talents do not always suppose a great Depth of Wit: A small Volume of Water can furnish a brighter Spout than a Brook, whose smooth, equal and abundant Course enriches a profitable Land. Men of Talents ought to have the greatest Reputation, this is their Recompence. Men of Wit ought to find the greatest Pleasure in Conversation, because they afford the most to it; this is an Acknowledgement founded on Justice. Talents are not communicated by frequenting those who possess them. With Men of Wit we open our Mind, enlarge our Views, and owe them a Part of our own. Wherefore the Pleasure and Custom of living with them cause Intimacy, and sometimes Friendship, when the Qualities of the Heart are met with, in spite of any Disproportion of State. For we must own in spite of the Madness of fashionable Wit, that Men of Literature whose Minds are known to be upright, are looked upon in the World, quite in another Light from those whose Talents are praised, but whose Persons are disowned.

It is said, that *Play and Love make all Conditions equal*: I am sure Wit would have been added, if this Proverb had been made since Wit is become a Passion. Play equals only by lessening the Superior; Love, by raising the Inferior, and Wit, because true Equality comes from that of our Souls. It were to be wished, that Virtue had produced the same Effect, but it belongs only to the Passions, to oblige Men to be nothing else but Men; that is to say, to renounce all exterior Distinctions.

Courtiers

Courtiers are those whose Learning deserves the most to be praised. If I was to give a Man Advice, who cannot make his Way in the World but by his Wit, I would tell him: "Prefer above all Things the Friendship of your Equals; it is the surest, the most becoming and often the most profitable. Our petty Friends do us the greatest Services without tyrannizing over Acknowledgment: But if you are desirous to enter only into the Ties of Society, do it at Court, these are the most agreeable and least troublesome." Art, Intrigues, Snares, and what some call black Practices are only made use of by Rivals in Ambition. Courtiers do not think of offending those who do not cross them in their Designs, and often take Pride in obliging them. They like to see Men of Merit devoted to them, whose Gratitude may do them Honour. The greater a Man is, the less he is inclined to keep too remarkable a Distance. Self-Love when it is clear-sighted differs very little from Modesty in its Effects. A Man of Learning who is worthy of Esteem, will suffer nothing from offensive Pride, which he might be exposed to with Men who have no other Superiority over him, but what their Impertinence supposes, and who believe it is a Means of proving it to him.

Since fine Wit is become a Contagion, some Men set up for being Protectors, who stand themselves in Need of Protection, and to whom nothing is wanting for this Purpose, but to be worthy of it. A great many of them should be sensible, that it is honourable enough for them to be useful to Learning, for they receive more Consideration from it than they could procure themselves by it.

Others, who imagine themselves to be Part of the polite World, because it is not known by what Means they got into it, appear astonished that Men of Learning are admitted, who in their Turn have more Reason to be surprized how such common Fellows are received, who in Spight of their Complaisance for great Men and their Impertinence with their Equals, will be always reckoned useless Members. How many false Men of the World are there! But at least, a Difference should be made between those who are well received,

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and those who force themselves into it, in Spight of the Dislike they experience.

Let us, in Effect, reduce Things to their true Standard. We are Men of the World by Birth and Dignities ; we are attached to it by Interest, and introduced into it by Meanness ; we are tied down in it by particular Circumstances, such as Alliances with Men of Fortune ; in fine, we are admitted into it by Choice ; this falls to the Share of lettered Men, and Taste necessarily draws Distinctions after it,

Men of Fortune who have Wit and Learning are so convinced of it, that if we consult them or observe their Conduct, we shall find that they enjoy their Fortune, but value themselves in other Respects. They are even offended at the Praises given to their Grandeur, because they are sensible they have another Kind of Merit. We pride ourselves in what we esteem the most. They seek Men of Literature, and do themselves Honour by their Friendship for them.

The Success of some learned Men has led a great many others astray. They all have flattered themselves with the same Advantages, and many of them were deceived ; whether it be, that they had less Merit, or whether their Merit was less communicative.

A great many young Men have imagined they followed their Genius, and their bad Success has made them incapable of entering into another Carreer, wherein they could have succeeded if they begun in Time. By this Means the State has lost many good Subjects, and the Republick of Letters has gained nothing by them.

Though the Advantages which Learning procures, are generally reduced to some Pleasures in Society, they however excite Envy. Fools are almost all Enemies by their State to Men of Wit. Wit is not often very profitable to him who is endowed with it ; and still there is no Quality that is so much exposed to Jealousy.

We are surprized that it is allowed us to make an Elogium of our Heart, and that nothing is so unbecoming and so strictly forbid us as to praise our Wit ; the Vanity which arises from the latter is by so much the less pardoned,

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doned, as it is well grounded. From hence this Conclusion has been drawn. that Men esteem Wit more than they do Virtue. Is there also no other Reason for it?

We do not methinks, love what we are obliged to admire. We admire only by Force and by Surprize. Reflection endeavours to prescribe against Admiration, and when it is forced to subscribe to it, it is joined by Humiliation, which Sentiment does not dispose us to love.

One Word often contains a Collection of Ideas; such are the Terms of Wit and of the Heart. If a Man makes us understand that he has Wit, and which is more, that he has Reason to believe it, it is the same Thing as if he had forewarned us, that we cannot impose upon him with false Virtues; that we cannot conceal our Faults from him, that he sees us such as we are and will judge us with Justice. Such a Declaration is already like an Act of Hostility. Whereas the Man who talks to us of the Goodness of his Heart and persuades us of it, lets us know, that we can depend upon his Indulgence, even on his Blindness, on his Services, and that we can be unjust towards him with Impunity.

Fools are not satisfied with a passive Hatred for Men of Wit; they represent them as dangerous, ambitious, intriguing Men: And suppose in fine, that Wit can be put to no other Use, but what they themselves would make of it.

Wit is only a Spring that is fit to put Virtue and Vice in Motion. It is like those Liquors which by their Mixture incorporate with the Flavour of others. Vicious Men employ it to gratify their Passions. But how often has Wit guided, maintained, adorned, unfolded and strengthened Virtue? Wit alone by understanding well its Interest, has produced as laudable Actions as Virtue itself could have done. Thus Folly alone has perhaps been guilty, or the Occasion of as many Crimes as Vice.

As for Men of Wit who are properly called so, that is to say, who are known by their Talents, or by their distinguished Taste for Sciences and Letters, we know them but little, if we dread their Competition or Intrigues in the Ways that lead to Fortune or Ambition.

The most Part of them are incapable of it, and those who by Chance meddle in it, are at the End commonly deceived. Professed Sharpers know them so well that when they engage them in any delicate Affairs, they endeavour to deceive them the first, then make them serve as Instruments, and take special Care not to trust them with the principal Spring. On the other Hand, there are Fools who with an Ardour that never slackens, closely pursue their Designs without losing Sight of their Object, and attain to all they desire.

The Love of Learning makes us insensible to Avarice and Ambition, consoles us in many of our Wants, and often hinders our knowing or feeling them. With such Dispositions Men of Wit ought when every Thing is considered, to be better than other Men. It happens also that Wit inspires those who are endowed with it with a secret Satisfaction, that helps to make them agreeable to others, to seduce themselves and renders them unfit for making a Fortune, and happily very indifferent in this Point.

Men of Wit should by so much the more despise the low Jealousy they excite, as they never live more agreeably than amongst themselves. They ought to know by Experience, how necessary they are to each other. When any Pique separates them, Fools soon reconcile them again, by the Impossibility they find of living continually with them.

Their foreign Enemies could do them but little Harm, if they were not imprudent enough to furnish them with Means to be cried down, by doing sometimes ill Offices to themselves.

I could wish for the Honour of Learning and the Happiness of those who cultivate it, that they were persuaded of a Truth which ought to be the fixed Principle of their Conduct. It is, that they can dishonour themselves by the injurious Things they do, say, or write against their Rivals; that the most they can do, is to mortify them without making Enemies of them, and engaging them to make as shameful Reprisals. But that it is not allowed them to tarnish a Reputation consigned to the Publick. We raise and destroy only our own Reputation,

tion, and we do it always by ourselves. Jealousy ever proves an Inferiority in him that feels it. Whatever Superiority we may have over a Rival in other Regards, as soon as we conceive any Jealousy against him, we must be inferior to him in some Shape.

There is no particular Man, however elevated or illustrious he may be, no Society, be it never so shining, that can determine the Judgment of the Publick, although a Faction can by chance procure Success, or occasion a short-lived Distaste. This even would be more difficult at present than it was in the last Age, because the Publick was then less instructed, nor did it set up so much to be a Judge. Now it amuses itself with literary Scenes, and personally despises those who act in them with Indecency; nor does it in the least, change the Opinion it has formed of their Works.

It is useless to prove to Men of Letters, that Rivality when it produces other Effects besides Emulation is shameful, this has no Need of being proved; but they should be sensible, that their Disunion is directly contrary to their general and particular Interest, yet they do not appear to perceive it.

Elaborate Works, judicious and severe but just and becoming Criticisms, where the Beauties are marked out in discovering the Faults to diversify the Object, are what we have a Right to expect from Men of Letters. Their Discussions should have no other Object but Truth, an Object which never caused Animosity or Ill-nature, and which turns out to the Advantage of Humanity; whereas their Quarrels are as dangerous for themselves, as they are scandalous to wise Men. None but the Stupid who learn from Envy to feel their Inferiority, and who are too proud to own it, are pleased to see such Men humble each other, whom they would otherwise be obliged to respect. Thus Fools learn to hide their Hatred under an Air of Contempt, which they alone should be the Objects of. It seems, that now a days we do precisely the contrary of what was practised when Animals were made to fight in order to amuse Men.

Methinks, I see in the Republick of Letters a Set of Men whose Knowledge could make them formidable;

yet they furnish Barbarians with Arms, and shew them how to make use of them.

C H A P. XI.

On the Madness of fine Wit.

THERE is nothing, however useful it may be, but what can be abused, was it only by Excess. I do not therefore undertake to examine in what Degree Learning may be useful to a flourishing State, and contribute to its Glory; but to know first, if our Taste for fine Wit be not too general, perhaps more than is necessary for its Perfection?

Secondly, to know from whence the Vanity proceeds we draw from it, and consequently, our extreme Sensibility on this Head? The Examination and Solution of these two Questions are necessarily founded on the same Reasons.

It is certain, that those who cultivate Letters by their Profession, would receive but few Advantages from them, if other Men had not at least, a Taste for them. This is the only Means of procuring the Recompence and Consideration for Learning which it has Need of, in order to support itself with Dignity. But when that Part of Literature which we commonly comprehend under the Name of fine Wit becomes a Mode, a Sort of publick Madness, Men of Letters gain Nothing and other Professions lose by it. The Crowd of Pretenders to fine Wit makes us distinguish those less who have a Right to it from others who have only Pretensions.

As for what regards those Men who are accountable to Society for different, serious and useful Professions, or even those of the first Necessity, which require all their Application when they are destined for them, such as War, Law, Trade, and the Arts; a moderate Knowledge and Taste for Letters would be doubtless, a great Resource for them. They find in them a Recreation, a Pleasure, a certain Exercise of the Mind, which is not useless to their other Functions. But if this Taste becomes too lively, and degenerates into Passion, it is im-

possible

possible but real Duties must suffer by it. The first of all our Duties are those of our Profession, because our first Obligation is to be Patriots.

Letters have in themselves an Attractive that seduces the Mind, makes other Occupations tiresome to it, and are the Cause why it neglects those that are most indispensable. We seldom see a Man in Love with fine Wit, that acquits himself well of another different Profession; I do not doubt, but there are Men engaged in Professions quite opposed to Letters for which however, they had distinguished Talents. It were to be wished for the Good of Society, they had wholly applied themselves to them, for their Genius and State of Life being in Contradiction, they are good for Nothing.

These unexceptionable Talents, these signal Vocations are very rare; the greatest Part of Talents depends upon Circumstances, on the Application and Exercise that is made of them. Let us examine a little these pretended natural but uncultivated Talents.

We see some Men whose Idleness forms a Sort of State in Life. They make themselves Admirers of fine Wit, and cry themselves up for Men of Taste, this is their Advertisement; then they look out for Writings, eagerly give their Opinion, protect and believe sincerely, or endeavour to make others believe, that they have a Share in the Works, and in the Success of those whom they have pestered with their Advice.

However, they form for themselves by this Means a Sort of Existence and Reputation in Society. With Whatever little Wit they shew, they remain in Inaction, and confine themselves prudently to the Right of judging peremptorily; they usurp in Opinion a Sort of Superiority over the Talents themselves, and are judged capable of doing whatever they have not done, for no other Reason, but for their having done nothing. When they are reproached with Idleness, they venture entering into the Career, they were before the Arbiters of. Their first Essay profits of the favourable Prepossession of their Society. It is praised, admired, and they cry out one to another, that the Publick should not be deprived of a Master-piece. Thus the modest Complaisance of the

Author suffers itself to be violated, and consents to be published.

Then the Illusion vanishes, the Publick condemns, or takes little Notice of the Work ; Admirers retract their Opinion, and the degraded Author learns by his own Experience, that there is no Profession but requires a Man's whole Time to itself. In reality, we see but few distinguished Works, or even Works of Taste which are not writ by professed Authors.

Bad Success does not always undeceive those it humbles. There is no Sort of Self-Love more sensible or more incorrigible than that which arises from fine Wit ; it is infinitely of a more mistrustful Nature in those whose Profession it is not, than in true Authors ; because we think it a greater Humiliation not to answer our Pretensions than our Duties. It is in vain for them to proclaim their Indifference, they deceive Nobody. Indifference is the only Disposition of the Soul which he that experiences it should be ignorant of ; it does not exist when it is announced.

There are no Works but require Labour ; the worst have often cost the most, and we take no Pains without some View. You have, you say, no other Reason but your Amusement : In this Case you must not get your Works printed, nor even read them to your Friends, inasmuch as you are desirous of consulting or amusing them. We ask no Advice about Things which do not concern us, nor do we pretend to amuse with those we have no Esteem for. Therefore this pretended Indifference is always false ; nothing but a very sensible Interest makes us act the Part of Indifference. It is a Precaution in case of bad Success, or the Ostentation of a Right which we are desirous to establish as unquestionable.

Never was fine Wit turned so much into Ridicule as since we are infatuated with it. Notwithstanding, our Weakness on this Head is such, that those who could acquire Glory otherwise, feed themselves on fine Wit, with Praises which they own the Falshood of. If you act with Sincerity towards them, you make them irreconcilable Enemies, they, who cry out with such Vehemence against Self-Love in professed Authors.

Let

Let us examine what the Causes are of this excessive Self-Love : The following have affected me the most.

Among savage People it was always Strength that caused the Nobility and Distinction of Men ; but in well governed Nations, where Strength is subservient to the Laws which prevent or repress Violence, the real and personal Distinction the most generally allowed of comes from Wit.

Strength cannot be amongst us a Distinction, or a Means for Fortune, it is at most an Advantage in painful Labours which are the Lot of the most unhappy Class of Mankind. But in Spight of the Subordination which the Laws, Policy, Wisdom or Pride could have established, there remains always for Wit in the most obscure Classes of Men, a Means which it can lay hold on for acquiring a Fortune and Elevation, and which Examples point out to it. For Want of the real Advantages which Wit can procure, according to the Application that is made of it, the least Step it makes towards Fortune, gains it a Sort of Esteem.

But how does it happen, that amongst all the Kinds of Wit that can be made use of, fine Wit is that which inspires the greatest Self-Love ? On what is the Superiority founded ? and what is it that favours so much our Pretensions to it ? This is what causes the Illusion.

First, Men are never more jealous of their Advantages than when they look upon them as personal, and imagine they owe them only to themselves ; and as they judge less of Wit by its remote Effects which they do not perceive the Connexion of, than by its present and immediate Signs, such of them as are not accustomed to Reflection, believe they see this Prerogative in fine Wit more than in any other Kind. They judge that it properly belongs to him who is endowed with it. They see, or believe they see it comes from himself without any other Help ; for they do not distinguish the Help he receives, which is notwithstanding very real. They do not reflect, that supposing equal Talents, the most distinguished Writers are always those who are fed with a well digested Reading of the most eminent Works on the same Subject. They do not see, I say, that the most fruitful

Genius when it is reduced to its own Ideas, has not many of them ; and that it is by the Knowledge and Comparison of foreign Ideas, we come to produce a Number of others which we may properly call our own.

Secondly, what still favours the advantageous Opinion we have of fine Wit, arises from the Parallel which we often have in our Power to make.

We observe, that the Son of a Man of Wit and Talents often make useless Efforts to trace his Father's Footsteps ; though there is nothing less hereditary than Wit, still the Son of a learned Man can become learned himself, if he will. In Geometry and in all other true Sciences which have Principles, Rules and a Method, we can rise, nay, we generally do rise, if not to Glory, at least to the Knowledge of our Predecessors.

Perhaps it will be said in Favour of certain Sciences, that their Use is more real and more generally allowed of than that of fine Wit, but this Objection is more favourable to these Sciences themselves than to those who profess them.

It is true, that whoever gives himself out for a Master of Sciences is obliged to be instructed in them to a certain Degree, otherwise he cannot impose grossly on himself, nor easily on others, if it be their Interest to inform themselves of it. Though the Sciences are not free from Quackery, yet it is more difficult to make Use of it in them, than in what is purely relative to Wit. We deceive ourselves in good Earnest in this Respect, and impose easily on others, especially if we do not expose ourselves by publishing our Works, and content ourselves with the simple Title of Men of Wit and Taste. This is what makes fine Wit so common that it should not inspire us with so much Vanity.

But let us pass this Crowd of witty Men by. On what do Authors of Merit, of which they have given incontestable Proofs, establish their Superiority with Regard to many other Professions ?

If we suppose that Wit should be the only Measure of Esteem, if we make no Account of the different Degrees of Usefulness, and judge of Professions only by the Portion of Wit they require, how many are there that
suppose

suppose as much and perhaps more Penetration, Sagacity and Quickness, greater Discussions and Comparisons, in a word, a more extensive Knowledge than the most renowned Works of Taste or Pleasure.

I shall not mention what regards the Government or Conduct of Armies; it may be imagined, that the Grandeur which attends certain Places has too strong an Influence on the Esteem we have for those who fill them with Success; this would be too advantageous an Example for me. Neither shall I enter into a Detail of each different Employment; there are more of them than we imagine, which have solid Titles to produce. Let us at least look over some of the Occupations in Society.

Should not a Magistrate who is worthy of his Place, have a just, exact, penetrating and exercised Wit, in order to arrive at Truth, through the Clouds with which Injustice and Cavilling endeavour to obscure it; to pull off from Imposture the Mask of Innocence it wears; to discern Innocence in Spight of the Confusion, Fear, or Awkwardness that seem to depose against it; to distinguish the Confidence of an innocent from the Audaciousness of a guilty Man; to know natural Equity and the positive Law equally well, and make them agree with and yield to each other according to the Interest of Society and consequently of Justice itself?

Should an Orator have less natural Endowments in order to propose and clear up an Affair on which the Judge is to pass Sentence; to direct his Knowledge, and sometimes to furnish him with it? I do not speak of the criminal Art of leading Justice astray.

What Discernment, what Nicety of Discussion does not the Art of Criticism require?

What Strength of Genius must there not be to invent certain Systems, which perhaps are false, but serve equally to explain some Phenomena; to prove and reconcile some Facts, and find out new Truths?

What Sagacity do not the Sciences require to invent Methods which prove the Extent of the Inventor's Knowledge, and are also useful, that they guide even those with

with Certainty, who do not conceive the Principles of them ?

However, there are a great many of these Philosophers who are scarce known ; nor are there any renowned ones, but such as have caused Revolutions in our Minds ; whilst those who are only useful remain in Obscurity. Men are never so ungrateful for good Offices as when they enjoy them without Trouble.

The Glory of fine Wit is felt and proclaimed by the Generality of Men, who are in some Degree, able to conceive the Ideas of it, but are incapable of producing them in the Form in which they are presented to them ; hence their Admiration arises. Whereas Philosophers are only understood by Philosophers, and can pretend to no more than the Esteem of their Equals, which is enjoying a very limited Degree of it.

But why should we enter into a strict Detail of the Occupations which are judged to belong principally to Wit ? There are a great many others not generally reckoned in this Class, which do not require a less Share of it.

Can it be doubted, for Example, but there is a great Extent of Knowledge required in order to fix a new Branch of Trade, or to perfect one already established ?

We must acknowledge, without doubt, that Wit cannot be denied to those who have signalized themselves in the different Carreers I was speaking of ; but it will be said, that there is no Need of a great Share of it to pursue them faintly. It is sufficient to answer this Distinction with another of the like Nature, and to ask what Account is made of those who creep in Literature, they are treated with Injustice and esteemed less than they deserve.

Another specious but weak Objection is made. It is observed, that a great many Men have acquired a Reputation in Arts and certain Sciences, though they were incapable of all the other Things to which they unprofitably applied themselves, and far from being in a Condition to produce the least Work of Taste or Pleasure, they were scarce able to attain to the common Cant of

Conversation.

Conversation. Hence we think we have a Right to look upon them as a Sort of Machines whose Springs have only one determined Effect.

But can we believe, that all those who have distinguished themselves by fine Wit, were equally capable of all the other Productions and different Employments of Society? They never perhaps could be made good Magistrates, good Merchants, or Artists. Are they very sure they were fit for these Employments? What they took for a Repugnance to certain Occupations, might have been as much a Sign of Incapacity as of Dislike. Are there no Examples of remarkable fine Wits who are ignorant enough in other Respects, even in those that seem to have the nearest Relation with Wit, such is the simple Talent of Conversation, for it is a Talent as well as others? We could certainly find Examples of it, and it would be wrong to be surprized at it.

To prove that Universality of Talents is a Chimæra, I will not look out for Examples in the common Class of Wits; let us rise to the Sphere of these rare Genius's who in doing Honour to Humanity, humble such Men as are set in Competition with them. *Newton* who has found out the System of the Universe, at least for a Time, was not looked upon as capable of every Thing, even by those who counted it an Honour to be his Countrymen.

William III. who was a good Judge of Men, being at a Loss in a politick Affair, was advised to consult *Newton*. *Newton*, said he, is only a great Philosopher. This Title was doubtless an uncommon Praise; but in this Occasion *Newton* was not the Man he wanted, he was incapable of it, and was only a great Philosopher.

It is more than probable, that if he had applied to the Science of Government the Labours he consecrated to the Knowledge of the Universe, King *William* would not have rejected his Advice.

In how many Circumstances, to how many Questions would not this Philosopher have answered those who might

might have advised him to consult the Monarch? *William* was only a Politician, a Hero, a great Prince.

The Prince and the Philosopher were equally capable of knowing the Limits of their Genius ; whereas a Man of Imagination would look upon it as an Injustice, to have his Advice refused on any Subject whatsoever. Men of this Character believe themselves capable of every Thing ; even the Want of Experience strengthens their Self-Love, which cannot be informed but by their Faults, or diminished but by the Knowledge they acquire.

The greatest Affairs, even those of Government require only sound Wit, fine Wit would be prejudicial, and great Wit is seldom necessary for them. They are not proper for Conduct, and are only fit for Revolutions ; They are formed to build or to destroy. Man's Genius has its Bounds and its Manner of going astray ; Reason well cultivated is sufficient for every Thing that is necessary for us.

If on one Side, there are but few Talents so adapted to one Object, that it would have been impossible for them who are endowed with them to succeed in any other Undertaking ; on the other Hand, we can maintain that every one has Talents, that is to say in general, that when Application and reiterated Exercises are joined to some natural Dispositions, we can succeed in any Employment whatsoever. I only advance a general Proposition, and except every Genius and every Man totally stupid, which are two Sorts of Beings almost equally rare.

We see for Example, some Men who do not appear capable of joining two Ideas together, and who notwithstanding, make the most complicated, the surest and quickest Combinations at Play. Such Operations necessarily require Wit ; it is said their Wit is calculated for Play. But if there was no Game invented, can we believe that these subtle Players would have been reduced to a meer material Existence ? This Wit so turned for Calculation and Combination, could have been applied to some Science which perhaps might have raised their Reputation.

Circumstances

Circumstances often decide concerning the Difference of Talents. Thus the striking of a Flint kindles a Flame by breaking the Equilibrium in which it was confined.

What is much more rare than great Talents, is a Flexibility of Wit that can seize an Object, twine round it and afterwards wind about to another; that can penetrate into the inmost Recesses of it with Strength, and represent it with Clearness. It is a Sight which instead of having a fixed and determined Direction in one Line, has a spherical Action. This is what we may call shining Wit, which can imitate all the Talents, but cannot however carry them to the same Degree, as those who are confined to them; and though sometimes it should be less shining than the Talents, it is much more useful.

Talents are or become personal to those who are endowed with them, or who have acquired them by Exercise; whereas shining Wit is communicated and unfolds that of other Men. Even this Kind of Wit which seems to belong solely to Nature has as much Need of Exercise in order to perfect itself, as Talents have. Men endowed with this Wit cannot be ignorant of it, how modest soever they may be; Modesty is not, and cannot be any other than an exterior Virtue. But if Presumption seizes them, if they exaggerate their Wit by mistaking the Ease with which they learn for Knowledge itself, or their Foresight and Sagacity for Experience, they fall into greater Blunders than Men of Application, but of narrow Wit. Wit is the first of all Means, it serves for every Thing and supplies almost nothing.

In the Disquisition I have gone through, my Design was not surely to depreciate truly fine Wit. Every Thing indeed can be looked upon as a Talent, or if you will, as a *Trade*. But there are some Things that require an Assemblage of rare Qualities, and fine Wit is of this Number. I would only shew that if it be in the first Class, it is not the only one that is in it; that if we give it an exclusive Preference, we join Ridiculousness to Injustice; and that if the Madness of fine Wit encreases or is maintained a long Time, in the Degree it now is in, it will infallibly be prejudicial to Wit.

It

It is against the Excess and Alteration of Good that we ought to be on our Guard ; Evil requires less Attention, because it manifests itself enough. To finish by an Example which has a great Connection with my Subject ; it would be resolving a Problem to examine how much the Press has contributed to the Progress of Letters and Sciences, and what Mischief it can also do them. I will not enter into a Discussion that requires a particular Treatise ; but desire only to have it observed, that if the Press has furnished a Number of good Works, it has also favoured and multiplied a terrible Number of Treatises on different Subjects ; insomuch that a Man who has a Mind to apply himself to a particular Kind of Writing, to examine it to the Bottom and to have a thorough Knowledge of it, is obliged to pay a Tribute of Reading to Study which is useless, disagreeable, and often contrary to the Subject. Before he is able to make a Choice of his Authors his Spirits are exhausted.

Thus the greatest Service that literary Societies can render at present to Letters, Sciences and Arts, is to invent Methods and trace out some Ways in order to spare Labour, guard against Errors, and conduct to Truth by the shortest and surest Paths.

C H A P. XII.

On the Relation between Wit and Character.

Character is the distinctive Form of one Soul from another, its different Manner of Being. Character is to Souls what Physiognomy and Variety of the like Features are to Faces.

Faces are composed of the same Parts, in this they resemble each other ; but the Coherence and Harmony of these Parts are different, this is what distinguishes one from the other and hinders Confusion.

Men without Character are Faces without Physiognomy, these common Faces which we do not take the Trouble to distinguish.

Wit is one of the Faculties of the Soul which may be compared to Sight ; and Sight can be considered by its Clearness,

Clearness, its Extent, or by the Objects it is exercised on: For besides our Faculty of seeing we can still learn to see.

I will not enter here into a metaphysical Examination, which may be judged useless to my Subject; though perhaps no metaphysical Knowledge could be better employed than that which is applicable to Manners; it would verify our Sentiments by demonstrating their Principles.

We saw in the foregoing Chapter the Injustice that is done by the Preeminence given to certain Talents: Now we shall see that the like Methods are taken with Regard to the Judgments that are formed of different Sorts of Wit. There are some of the first Order that are sometimes confounded with Nonsense.

Do not we see some Men whose Openness and Candour hinder us from doing Justice to their Wit? Yet Candour is the simplest and most natural Expression of an Idea which in the Main, may be lively and delicate; and this simple Expression has so much Beauty and by so much the more Merit, as it is the Masterpiece of Art in those to whom it is not natural.

Candour is the interior Sentiment of the Purity of our Soul, which hinders our thinking we have any Thing to dissemble.

Ingenuity can be a Consequence of Folly when it is not an Effect of Unexperience; but Simplicity is no more than the Ignorance of Things which are agreed on, easy to be learned, and good to be despised. Candour is the first Mark of a generous Soul.

Ingenuity and Candour can be met with in the brightest Genius, and then they are the most precious and amiable Ornaments of it.

It is not surprizing, that the Vulgar (who are not worthy of respecting such uncommon Advantages) should be Admirers of Subtlety of Character, which is only the Fruit of the fixed and followed Attention of ordinary Wit inspired by Interest. Subtlety may be a Mark of Wit, but it is never found in a Man of superior Genius, unless he happens to have a low Heart. A
superior

superior Genius disdains little Springs, and is employed only on great, that is to say, on simple ones.

We ought also to distinguish Subtlety of Wit from that of Character. Subtle Wit is often false, only because it is too subtle; it is too dilated a Body to have any Consistence. Subtlety imagines instead of seeing; it is deceived by the Dint of supposing. Penetration sees and Sagacity foresees. If Judgment be the Basis of Wit, its Quickness still contributes to its Justness; but if Imagination be predominant, it is the most fruitful Source of Errors.

In fine, Subtlety is a Lie in Action, and a Lie is always occasioned by Fear or Interest, and consequently by a base Motive. We never see a powerful and absolute Man, whatever Vices he may otherwise have, who tells a Lie to one subordinate to him, because he does not fear him. But if this should happen, it must surely be through Interest, in which Case, he ceases in this Respect to be powerful, and is in a State of Dependency for what he wants and cannot compass by open Force.

We must not be surprized that a Man of Wit is deceived by a Fool. The one follows constantly what he has in View, and the other does not think it necessary to be on his Guard. The deceiving Men of Wit comes from their not making up their Accounts as they should with Fools, that is to say, from their making too little Account of them.

We have more Reason to be surprized at the Blunders into which Men of Wit fall of themselves. Their Faults are notwithstanding less frequent than those of other Men, sometimes of a more serious Nature, and always more remarkable. However it be, I have enquired into the Reason of it, and I believe I have found it out in the Want of Conformity which sometimes is observed between a Man's Wit and his Character.

The mutual Dependence of Wit and Character can be looked upon in three different Aspects. First, when we have not the Character of our Wit, or the Spirit of our Character; secondly, when we have not Wit enough for our Character; thirdly, when we have not Character enough for our Wit.

A Man

A Man, for Example, who is capable of great Views, of conceiving, digesting and ordaining great Designs, miscarries, when he has a Mind to put them in Execution. because he grows out of Conceit with them, and is disheartened even at the Obstacles which he foresaw, and which he has also found out a Remedy for. Still he is acknowledged to be a Man of a great deal of Wit, and in Reality it is not in this Point he is wanting. We are surprized at his Conduct, because we do not know that he is fickle and incapable of Constancy in his Character; that he has only some Fits of Ambition which give Way to his natural Indolence; that he is incapable of a fixed Will, to which few Things resist, even in narrow-minded Men; and that in short, he has not the Character of his Wit. Without wanting Wit, we are wanting to our Wit through Fickleness, Passion or Timidity.

Another Man whose Character is fit for great Enterprizes, who has Courage and Constancy, wants Wit which furnishes the Means for them. This Man has not the Spirit of his Character.

In this consists the Opposition of Character and Wit. But there is another Manner of committing Faults, in spite of a great Deal of Wit that is even analogous to Character, which happens, when we have not Wit enough for our Character.

A Man of a quick and extensive Wit conceives still greater Projects; but he must necessarily miscarry in them, because his Wit is not sufficient for his Character. There are some that act foolishly, who, if they had another Character, could have justly passed for Men of superior Genius.

Let us put in Opposition to them a Man whose Wit is confined to a narrow Sphere, but whose Heart being free from strong Passions, is not carried beyond this limited Sphere. His Enterprizes and the Means he employs are in equal Proportion; thus he commits no Faults, and is looked upon as a wise Man, because the Reputation of Wisdom depends less on the remarkable Things which are done, than on the Folly which is avoided.

Perhaps

Perhaps Men of a lively Temper have more Wit than others ; but they have also the greatest Need of it. We must see well and be sure footed when we have a Mind to walk fast, otherwise Falls are frequent and dangerous. It is for this Reason, that of all Fools the liveliest are the most insupportable.

Too lively a Character is sometimes hurtful to the justest Wit by forcing it imperceptibly beyond its Bounds. We are not humbled at this Excess, because we suppose that a small Degree is contained in a greater ; yet in this Case, Great and Small are not well compared, and are of a different Nature. Greater Strength is required to stop at the Goal than to exceed it by the Violence of the Impulsion. To see the Term we tend to is Judgment ; to attain to it is Justness ; to stop at it is Strength ; and to go beyond it is perhaps Weakness.

Judgments that are extremely quick are like those of Self-Love, which sees a great deal, compares but little and judges ill. The Science of Self Love is of all others the most cultivated, and the least perfected. If Self-Love could admit of Rules in Conduct, it would become the Seed of a great many Virtues, and would supply those even which it seems to exclude.

It will be objected perhaps that we see some Men of a grave Behaviour and of unexceptionable Wit fall into Errors that are in some Degree extravagant ; but we do not consider that these very Men in spite of their cold Exterior are of a violent Character. Their Sedateness is only apparent, and the Effect of some Fault in their Organs ; it is a Carriage occasioned by Haughtiness or Education ; a false Greatness ; and their Reservedness is Nothing else but Pride.

Nothing could be more instrumental to our Happiness than a Sort of Equilibrium between our Ideas and Affections, between our Wit and Character.

In fine, if we reproach Men of Wit with so many Faults, it is because there are but few of them who receive from Nature or from the Extent of their Wit a proportionable Degree of Character, which unhappily does not change.

Manners

Manners are corrected, Wit is strengthened or changed, Affections alter their Object, the same Object can successively inspire Love or Hatred ; but Character is unalterable, it can be constrained or disguised, but never destroyed. Humbled and creeping Pride is still Pride.

All that a Man who has the greatest Wit can do is to examine and know himself, and afterwards to ballance Accompts with his Character ; otherwise his Faults and Misfortunes serve only to pull him down, without correcting him ; however, they furnish a Man of Wit with Matter for Reflexion ; this without Doubt is the Reason, why it is said, that Men of Wit never want some Resource. Reflexion serves as a Safeguard to Character, but does not correct it ; as Rules serve a Genius, but do not inspire it. They are but of little Use to a Man of a moderate Capacity ; but they prevent the Faults of a superior Wit.

C H A P. XIII.

On Esteem and Respect.

WHAT I have hitherto said of the different Judgments of Men, engages me to endeavour to discover the Principles of them.

All the Faculties of our Soul are reduced to Feeling and Knowing ; we have only Ideas or Affections, for Hatred itself is only a Revolt against what opposes itself to our Affections.

In Things purely intellectual we should never make false Judgments, if we had all the Ideas present that regard the Subject we have a Mind to judge. Our Mind is never out in its Judgment but when it wants a sufficient Knowledge of the Subject in Hand, whatever Knowledge it may otherwise have in other Respects ; but in those where our Interest is concerned, our Ideas are not sufficient to form just Judgments. The Justness of the Mind in this Case, depends on the Uprightness of the Heart.

If we are affected for or against an Object, it is very hard for us to be in a Condition to judge impartially of it.

it. Our Interest whether it be more or less unfolded, better or worse understood, is always felt and is the Rule of our Judgments. There are some Subjects on which Society has passed its Verdict, and has not left them to our Discussion. We agree to its Decisions through Education or Prejudice; but Society has itself been determined by the Principles which direct our particular Judgments, that is to say, by Interest. We, each of us, consult our personal Interest; Society has consulted the common, which rectifies particular Interest.

It was publick Interest that dictated the Laws and is the Cause of Virtue, as private Interest is of Crimes, when it is opposed to it. Publick Interest determines the general Opinion, and is the Measure of Esteem, of Respect, and of the true Value of Things, that is to say, of the Value agreed on for them. Private Interest decides the most sanguine and intimate Judgments, such are the Judgments of Friendship and Love, the two most sensible Effects of the Love we bear ourselves. Let us proceed to the Application of these Principles.

What else is Esteem but a Sentiment that inspires what is useful to Society? But though this Usefulness be necessarily relative to all the Members of Society, yet it is too habitual, and not direct enough to be felt in a lively Manner. Thus our Esteem is almost nothing else but a Judgment we form, not an Affection that warms us, such is the Friendship those inspire us with who are personally useful to us; and I understand by personal Usefulness not only Services, material good Offices, but also Pleasure and every Thing that can affect us agreeably, though it may at the End be really prejudicial to us. Usefulness thus understood, ought to be applied even to Love, which is the liveliest of all Sentiments, because its Object is what we look upon as our supreme Good at the Time we are affected with it.

It will be objected to me perhaps that if Love and Esteem have the same Source, and that according to my Principles they differ only in their Degrees, Love and Contempt should never meet together in the same Object, though it may be said, there are Examples of it. We do not commonly make the same Objection with
 Regard

Regard to Friendship ; we suppose that an honest Man, who has a Friendship for a contemptible Person, is ignorant of, not blind to his Faults ; and that when he finds out his Character, which he is supposed unacquainted with, he will do it Justice by breaking off. I will not examine what regards the Appearance of Friendship, which does not always really exist where we imagine we see it. There are a great many Acts of pretended Friendship and Acknowledgment, which are only Proceedings occasioned sometimes by Interest and not Attachments.

Besides, if I answer the Objection made against the liveliest Sentiment, I shall, I believe, be dispensed from clearing up what regards weaker Sentiments.

I say therefore, that Love and Contempt have never had the same Object at the same Time : For I do not understand here by Love, an ardent but indeterminate Desire, which can be fed with every Thing and fixed by Nothing, and whose Violence even forbids it to make a Choice. I speak of that Sort of Love which confines our Will to one Object and excludes all others. A Lover of this Kind I say, can never despise the Object of his Attachment, especially if he believes he is loved by it : For injured Self-Love can counter-balance and destroy even Love. We see indeed some Men who feel the strongest Passion for an Object that is generally despised ; but far from partaking of this Contempt, they are ignorant of it ; if before their Passion they have been of the same Opinion with others, they forget it afterwards, retract it in good Earnest and cry out against Injustice. If they happen in these Transports so common to Lovers to make themselves bitter Reproaches, they are only Fits of inconsiderate Passion, which happen to Lovers who have the greatest Reason to respect each other.

Blindness may not be of constant Duration, and can have Intervals wherein a Man blushes for his Attachment ; but this Glimmering of Reason is but a Moment's Sleep of Love which soon awakens in order to disavow it. If we allow there are Faults in the Object we love, they are such as constrain and torment our Love
but

but do not humble it. Perhaps we may be brought to own our Weakness and forced to allow a Mistake in our Choice, but this we do through an Impossibility of refuting what is objected to us, in order to withdraw ourselves from Persecution and to secure our Ease against fatiguing Remonstrances, which we are no longer obliged to hear when we agree to every Thing. A Lover is far from feeling or believing what he is forced in this Case to own, especially if he be of a mild Character. But if he be firm in his Resolutions he resists with Courage. What are represented to him as shameful Blemishes in the Object of his Passion, will appear to him to be only Misfortunes which make it dearer to him : Then Compassion comes in to double, ennoble and make a Virtue of his Love, and sometimes with Reason, though it is not possible to make some Censors adopt it who are incapable of Sentiment, and of making the nice and proper Distinctions that separate Vice from Misfortune. Let those who never loved know, whatever Superiority of Wit they may have, that there are an infinite Number of Ideas, even of just Ideas, to which they cannot attain, and which are only reserved to Sentiment.

I just said that Moments of Vexation cannot be looked upon as a fixed State of the Soul, nor prove that Contempt is united to Love. Now I must prevent the Objection which may be drawn from some Men, who constantly feel the Shame of their Attachment, and are mortified at the vain Efforts they make in order to disengage themselves from it. There are surely such Men, and a greater Number of them than we imagine ; but they are no longer in Love, whatever Appearance of it they may have.

There is nothing so much confounded with Love and often more opposed to it than the Force of Habit. It is a Chain which it is harder to be freed from than from Love, especially at a certain Time of Life ; for I doubt, whether we can find in Youth the Examples we would fain alledge, not only because young Men have not had Time to contract this Habit, but also because they are incapable of it.

A young

A young Man who loves an Object the most authentically contemptible, is far from suspecting it to be so. He has perhaps as yet no fixed Idea of the Terms of Esteem and Contempt, but is hurried away by his Passion. This is what he feels; I shall not say what he knows: For at this Time, he thinks and knows nothing, he enjoys. If this Object ceases to please him because he finds another more agreeable, he is ready to think and repeat what you please of the former.

But in riper Years it is not so, an Habit is contracted; we cease to love and remain attached. We despise the Object of it, because we see it such as it really is, and we see it so, only because we are no longer in Love.

Whereas our Interest is the Rule of our Esteem, when it carries us to Affection, it is very hard for us to join Contempt to it. Love does not depend on Esteem; but Esteem in a great many Occasions, depends on Love.

I own that contemptible Persons whom we own to be such are useful to us; but we look upon them as vile Instruments that are dear to us, but do not love them. Men of Honour are scrupulously exact in making a Return for their Services; because to owe them Gratitude would be too mortifying a Load.

It is with Reluctance, I dare say, that Men naturally sensible are not commonly the best Judges of what is esteemable, that is to say, of what is so for Society. Parents whose Tenderneſs for their Children is carried to a Weakneſs are the least fit to make good Patriots of them. Yet we are inclined to love by Preference such Persons as are known to be sensible, because we flatter ourselves with the Thoughts of becoming the Object of their Affection, and prefer ourselves to Society. There is a Sort of undetermined Sensibility which is only a Weakneſs of Organs more worthy of Compassion than Acknowledgment. True Sensibility is that which rises from our Judgments but does not form them.

I have observed, that those who love the publick Good, who espouse the common Cause and make it their Study without Ambition, have a great deal of Acquaintance but few Friends. A publick spirited Man in an active Sense is not commonly fit for Friendship or

for Love. It is not only because his Mind is taken up otherwise, it is because we have only a determined Portion of Sensibility which cannot be shared without being diminished. The Fire of our Soul in this Respect is very different from a material Flame, which augments and is propagated by the Quantity of Nourishment it receives.

We see amongst People where Patriotism has been held in the greatest Honour, that Fathers sacrificed their Sons to the State; we admire their Courage or are shocked at their Barbarity, because we judge according to our own Manners. Had we been educated in the same Principles we should think that they scarce made a Sacrifice, whereas all their Affections were centered in their Country, and that there is no Object but what Prejudice of Education can turn our Affections to. Amongst these Republicans Friendship was only an Emulation of Virtue, Marriage a Law of Society, Love a transient Pleasure, and only their Country a Passion. Friendship amongst them was confounded with Esteem; with us the one is, as I said, a simple Judgment of the Mind, and the other a Sentiment.

We are not afraid to say that we esteem a Man whom we do not love; in this we do at the same Time, an Act of Justice, of personal Interest and of Candour: It signifies the same Thing as if we had said, that this very Man is indeed publick-spirited, but we have Reason not to be satisfied with him, and that we prefer ourselves to Society. This Concession which formerly would have been shameful, proves now a days a Sort of philosophical Courage.

The Alteration that has happened in Manners is the Reason why that Sort of Respect which was the Perfection of Esteem amongst the People I mentioned, is excluded from us and can be joined with Contempt.

Respect is nothing else but our acknowledging the Superiority of another. If Superiority of Rank always followed that of Merit, or if exterior Marks of Respect were not prescribed, its Object would be personal as that of Esteem, and it must have been so originally, of what Nature soever the Merit was that was in Fashion; but

as some Men had no other Merit but that of maintaining themselves in the Places which their Ancestors have honoured, it was no longer possible since that Time, to confound the Person with the Respect his Places required. This Distinction is at present so commonly established, that we see some Men who claim for their Rank what they dare not pretend to themselves. You owe, they say, humble Respect to my Place and to my Rank; but they do themselves the Justice not to dare to say, to myself. If Modesty makes Use of the like Expressions, it has not invented them, nor could it ever have adopted a Manner of speaking that makes us contemptible.

The same Reflection has evinced that the same Degree of Respect which might have been refused to a Man, in spite of the Elevation of his Rank, ought to be granted to Superiority of Merit, notwithstanding the Meanness of the State in which it is found. For Respect by changing Objects in its Application, has not changed its Nature, and is due only to Superiority. Thus, this great while past there have been two Sorts of Respect, that which we owe to Merit, and that which is paid to places or Birth. This last Sort of Respect is no more than a Form of Words and Gestures to which reasonable Men submit, nor can we endeavour to free ourselves from it, but through Folly and a childish Pride.

Virtue being the Object of true Respect, it is plain, it is not a Tribute we owe to Wit or Talents which we praise and esteem, that is to say, we set a high Value on them, nay, we admire them, but we owe them no Respect, whereas they cannot always screen us from Contempt. We do not despise precisely what we admire, but we may despise in some Regards, those whom we admire in others. This Discernment however is rare, the great Number of Things which take up the Imagination of Men do not permit them to do so exact a Piece of Justice.

Contempt in general is inseparable from low Vices, and Hatred from bold and daring Crimes, which unhappily are above Contempt, and make us sometimes confound Horror with a Sort of Admiration. I say nothing in particular of Anger which regards chiefly

what becomes personal to us. Anger is an open and transient Hatred, Hatred is Anger kept within our Breasts but followed. In considering all the different Gradations, it appears to me, that every Thing conspires to establish the Principles I have proposed, and to resume them in a few Words.

We esteem what is useful to Society; we despise what is prejudicial to it; we love what is personally advantageous to us, and hate what is contrary to our Desires; we respect what is superior to us, and admire what is extraordinary.

Nothing more remains to be done but to clear up an Equivocation which is very common on the Word Contempt, and is often made Use of in a very different Acceptation from the Idea or Sentiment of it, which we experience. We often believe, or at least are inclined to make it pass for granted, that certain People are despised, because others make it their Business to undervalue them. I have observed on the contrary, that when we depreciate with Affectation, we are vexed at not being able to despise, and that we are forced to esteem those against whom we inveigh. Such Contempt as is declared with Haughtiness is neither Indifference nor Disdain; it is the Language of Jealousy, of Hatred mixed with Esteem and violated with Pride; for Hatred often is a Proof of more Motives of Esteem than even the sincerest Protestations of it.

C H A P. XIV.

On the real Value of Things.

WE have examined in the foregoing Chapter only the Esteem that is relative to Persons; let us now apply our Principles to the Judgments we form of the real Value of Things; when this is done, we shall find that esteeming signifies no more than valuing.

In what Proportion do we esteem or value Things? In that of their Usefulness joined to their Rarity; and this second Manner of considering them is what distinguishes the Esteem we have for Persons from the Value

lue we set on Things. This Distinction is so sure, that we do not esteem Persons on Account of their Rarity, but by considering them as Things. Such is, for Example, the Esteem we have for Talents, which in this Case, we make an Abstraction of from the Person.

We must also observe with regard to Things, what I have done with regard to Persons, that the Pleasure, whether it be real, or of Agreement, which these Things can give us by gratifying our Senses or our Self-Love, is referred to their Usefulness; but of what Nature soever this Usefulness may be, it always is combined with Rarity to make up the Value we put upon it. Besides Usefulness is measured by its Extent; so that of two Things which are equally rare and useful, that which is useful to the greatest Number of Men deserves the most Esteem; and these three moveable Rules of the Value we set on Things, which are Usefulness, the Extent of this Usefulness, and Rarity are combined to infinite Degrees and always follow the same Laws.

Let us clear up these Principles by Examples. Things of the first Necessity such as Bread and Water cannot be rare, otherwise they would not be necessary; not being rare, they cannot attract our Esteem; but if unhappily they ceased for a Time, to be common, what a Price would not we put on them? This Principle is the Rule of Trade.

But how do we fix the Value of all material Things? By the same Law. We set a high Value on a Diamond, in what consists its Usefulness? In its Lustre, in the vain Pleasure of Dress, and above all in the frivolous Vanity that results from the Opinion of Riches and Apparel. But on the other Hand, its Degree of Rarity is of the first Order, and compensates and exceeds the Degrees which other Things might have with regard to Usefulness. Besides in another Light, its Usefulness is very great, whereas it is placed in the Order of Riches that are representative of every Thing that is materially useful.

Let us go next to Talents; how do we value them? By the Combination of their Usefulness, whether for Conveniency or Pleasure; by the Number of those who

enjoy them, and by the Rarity of the Men that exercise them.

Arts or Trades of the first Necessity are little esteemed, because every one can exercise them, and they are left to that Part of Society which unhappily is the most despised. We do not bear Labourers the Esteem which Gratitude, Compassion and Humanity should inspire. But if we suppose a Thing impossible, that there was only one Man capable of procuring what the Harvests supply, we would make him a God, nor would our Veneration for him diminish until he communicated his Knowledge to the Publick, and acquired by this Means, a greater Right to our Acknowledgment. We might after his Death, pay to his Memory what we refused to his Person. This is perhaps what procured divine Honours to certain Inventers. There have been a great many Deities in Paganism who have had no other Beginning.

As to what regards such Arts as are purely agreeable, and whose Usefulness consists in the Pleasures they procure, in what Order of Esteem do we place them? Is it not according to their Degrees of Pleasure and the Number of Men that can enjoy them?

There is no Art in which Men in general have such a Degree of Sensibility as in Musick; and as the Pleasure it does them depend on the Performance, it seems they should prefer those who play Pieces of Musick to those who compose them: but on the other Hand, Composers are more rare, and their Usefulness is more extensive. Their Compositions can be carried about and executed every where; whereas the Talent of Execution however superior it may be, is limited to the Pleasure of a few People, at least in Comparison of the Composer.

The Rarity of a Thing without any Sort of Usefulness, can deserve no Esteem. The Man who flung Grains of Millet Seed through the Eye of a Needle, was probably the only one that could do it; but this Dexterity was of no Use; the Curiosity that was excited by it, had even no Pleasure in it. There are some Things which we are glad to see, not for the Pleasure we find in them, but for the Sake of knowing whether they really are.

Why

Why do Works of Wit abstracting from their principal Use, deserve more Esteem, why have they a greater Reputation than the rarest Talents? It is by the Advantage they have of being spread about, and of being equally liked by those who are capable of understanding them. *Corneille* perhaps was not a more rare Man than *Lully*; yet their Names are not in the same Line, because there is a greater Number of Men more capable of enjoying the Works of *Corneille* than those of *Lully*; and because the Pleasure that arises from Works of Wit, opens the Mind of the Readers, or by affecting their Hearts, gratifies their Sentiments and Self-Love, and in many Respects, exceeds the Pleasures of the Senses caused by Talents.

Not that we make in our Judgments so exact an Analysis, or so geometrical a Comparison; natural Justice inspires them to us, and an attentive Examination confirms them.

Let us run over the Arts and Sciences with this studied Attention, and we shall find, that the Esteem in which they are, always arises from the same Principles, which are also extended to Politicks and the Science of Government.

Enquiries were often made to know the best Sort of Government; some People have determined themselves for one or the other, by their particular Taste: Others think the Form of Government should depend on the Place, and on the Character of the People. This may be true; but whatever Form is preferred, the first Rule is always taken from the Extent of Usefulness. The best of Governments is not that which makes some Men most happy, but that which makes the greatest Number of Men happy. How many unhappy Men are made, to furnish Materials for what compleats or ought to compleat the Happiness of some particular People, who do not even know how to enjoy it.

Those who are entrusted with the Fate of Men, should always carry back their Accompts to the common Sum.

Every Thing is and ought to be a Calculation in our Conduct; if we commit Faults, it is because our Calculation does not take in all that should enter into the Sum

total

total, whether it be for Want of sufficient Knowledge, or through Ignorance or Passion.

Not but that the Passions themselves calculate sometimes very nicely But they do not compute the Time that should enter into the Calculation, hence arise all our Errors : Thus I explain myself

Prudence of Conduct depends on Experience, on Foresight, and on the Judgment of present Circumstances ; We should therefore attend to the Time past, present, and to come ; the Passions consider only one of these Objects at once, the present or the Time to come, never the past. Some Examples will make this Truth plain.

Love is taken up with the present Time ; it seeks actual Pleasure, forgets past Evils, nor does it foresee the future.

Anger, Hatred, and Vengeance which is the Consequence of them, judge in the same Manner as Love. These Passions always put Things in the best Light they possibly can, for their present Happiness ; it is only the Time to come that causes their Misfortune ; Ambition on the contrary, considers only the Time to come ; what was the Term of its Hopes, when it arrives at it, is no more than the Means it makes use of.

Avarice judges as Ambition with this Difference, that one is actuated by Hope, and the other by Fear.

An ambitious Man hopes to arrive at all Things one after another, a covetous Man fears to lose all. They neither of them know how to enjoy.

Avarice like other Passions, is only a redoubling of Love for one's self ; but it always acts with Timoroufness and Distrust. A covetous Man fearing all Evils ardently desires Riches which he looks upon as an Exchange for every Thing that is good. He does not however deal as hardly with himself as it is supposed. He calculates very nicely, draws pretty just Conclusions from a false Principle, and finds a great many Enjoyments even in his Privations. There is nothing he does not deprive himself of, in Hopes to enjoy every Thing. At the Time he denies himself a Pleasure, he enjoys in a confused Manner, all the Satisfaction he thinks he
can

can procure himself. True Privations are those which we are obliged to ; the Privations of a covetous Man are voluntary. Avarice is the vilest, but not the most unhappy of Passions.

We cannot be too careful in correcting and regulating the Passions which make Men unhappy, without disparaging them ; and we should make those Passions more and more odious, which without making them unhappy, vilify them, and are prejudicial to Society, which ought to be the first Object of our Attachment.

End of VOL. I.

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MEMOIRS

UPON THE

MANNERS *of this* AGE.

PART. I.

I HAVE frequently reflected upon the Way in which I spent my Youth; and made myself sensible, how much Ridicule I should have spared, how much Pleasure I should have procured myself, had I pursued a different Conduct. Had I never done but what really pleased me, I had not only been considered as one of more good Sense, but I should have been much happier than I have been. I should, in short, have had more Pleasure, and committed fewer Follies.

I at this Time believe, that I owe much to my Experience; but to my Education nothing: I think too, that had I had a good one, I should not have made an unworthy Use of it.

A high Birth, a considerable Fortune, a distinguished Rank, an agreeable Figure, perhaps not without Wit; in these you see the original Springs of my Wrong-headedness; yet I dare presume, that these Advantages might have produced me better, had I been taught the Duty, and the Art of laying them out better. My Father, very likely, imagined it was

enough for his Son to be Heir to his Title and Estate, for he took no Sort of Care about my Education, and left it to the Disposal of Custom: He gave me one of those Preceptors who, as one may say, were to be got by advertising for, and who was about my Person but as a supernumerary Menial. His Instructions were simply to attend me, and I forbade him to trouble me with Advice.

Upon this, he regulated his Conduct, and with great Ease and Unconcern, waited for the Time of his being dismissed with a Recompence, which he would not have obtained, had he set himself to deserve it.

Nobody, before me, had launched into Life so young as I did; those of my Age, employed in their Exercises, lived amongst one another, or when they began their Appearance in the World, it was only to acquit themselves of their respective Devoirs in it: They were obliged to put on a decent, modest Countenance, and to listen to others, till they should wear off their Bashfulness, and assume an Air of more Confidence. At that Time too, the Interior of the Domestic was more strictly kept, and of course, the Union in Families less liable to be broken in upon. There was not then at *Paris*, those open Houses, of which the Number has been so multiplied, that one has more Obligation to those who resort to them, than to those who are at the Expence of keeping them; infomuch that now a days, any odd Creature who receives his Exclusion from one House, need not despair of being considered as good Company in another.

As it is principally the Errors of my Youth that I mean to pass in Review, it will not be surprizing that Love should have a great Share in them.

Love has been ever very rare, at least that Sort of Love which deserves the Epithet of sentimental; yet am I persuaded, that it is at this Day much rarer, than it was formerly. Men have always had the same Passions, but those which are most natural to us, take, according to the Times and Places, different

rent Modes of Existence, which have an Influence over the Nature of those Passions themselves.

That Head-strongness of the Senses, which runs away with us in our earliest Youth, and which calms, or dissipates itself in an Age more or less advanced, is common to all Men, and directs them towards the same End; but this Desire ardent as it is, is rarely united to that of pleasing, whereas it made an essential Part of the ancient Manners: From thence sprung a delicate Politeness which is now lost; one sees still some Traces of it in those who were the Men in Fashion in their Time: A Spirit of Gallantry forms their distinctive Character, and makes them say a thousand sprightly and flattering Things to which the shining Sparks of our Days, and even those superior to the old ones in Point of Wit, would find it difficult to come up to. They have found it then more commodious to turn that to Derision to which they could not attain; they fancy they have gained much by this Change, yet it is certain, that leaving the Consideration of Vice or Virtue out of the Question, there is a great deal lost to Pleasure by having renounced Decency. A single Look, a slight Distinction, the least Preference on the Part of the beloved Object, were then inestimable Favours; and what does it signify from what Motives a great Happiness arose, if that Happiness was actually felt? Is there for those who love, a State preferable to that of having their Hopes amused and kept up, their Desires animated and flattered, and of arriving, by a delicious Gradation, to the Height of Happiness, whilst the Pleasures of the Senses are whetted by all the Illusions of Self-Love?

Thus was the Love-Passion treated in the last Age; I have seen some Traces of it in this, but I did not come into Life till the Term of its Revolution.

The Principles of Coxcombray are in *France* as ancient as its Monarchy; but it was not till our Time, that the Science of it was pushed to the Perfection we now see it in, and I came into it with such happy Dispositions, I opened such new Roads in it, that I might be reckoned amongst the Inventors of it.

My Outset however did not foreshew the Eminence I was one Day to attain to in this Career: In my early Season of Youth, I was a Stranger to my own Talents; I had even a Modesty, a Sort of Bashfulness which already in that Time, might have done Honour to one of the fair Sex, and which at present, one is not always sure to find in a Girl coming out of a Convent.

With these unfashionable Qualifications, my Countenance wore upon it all the native Candour of my Soul. The Soul it is that forms and animates the Physiognomy; Nature only bestows the Features. The Taste I soon felt in myself for Women, became in a short Time so quick, that I was in no Condition of choosing a determinate particular Object; they all made alike an Impression upon my Heart, or rather upon my Senses. The first, I will not say, who should have loved me, but who would have given me Leave to love her, would have been sure of making me in Love with her; yet all the Violence of my Desires could not triumph over my Timidity; I durst not hazard a Declaration which I looked upon as something terribly daring; and I should have held myself too much humbled by being baulk'd in it. Timidity is the first Effect of Self-Love, but one's Contempt of others is often sufficient to give one Boldness. I imagined besides, that to make an Impression on a Lady's Heart, required a singular Merit: The most signal Advances, the most indecent Attractions of which I was the Aim, operated nothing in my Favour; and I should have long remained in this State, had it been the Order of Nature, that such a State could long endure. It came then at length to an End; and it will doubtless be conjectured, that it was through some one of those experienced Women who proffer their Service towards finishing the Education of young Fellows, who give them their first Lessons of Pleasure, who do not indeed forget at first, to talk to them of Sentiments; but who, as they cannot flatter themselves with inspiring them with any, and less yet with Constancy,

fancy, modestly bring themselves down afterwards to act a more complaisant Part, if but to have a Share of what is going in Society, and keep some Hold of a World that is slipping from them.

The Lady however, who was the Object of my first Attachment, was of a very different Character; and we found ourselves engaged on each Side, before she had thought, or I had dared to conceive a Hope of it. I was then eighteen and she about five and twenty; she was handiome and well fashioned, her Understanding was good, her Heart turned to Tenderness, but her Temper was serious even to Melancholy, and a cold reserved Air made her pass for insensible; she was considered then in that Light, and consequently nobody formed a Thought of designing upon her; besides spreading but little in the World, and rarely seen out of her Domestic, she lived with a Husband who was rather advanced in Years, and who repaired, by a thousand Attentions for her, the Charms of Person which he no longer had, and for whom she had a Friendship and Respect.

With the little Assurance that I then had, it can scarce be supposed, that I could think of attacking a Woman whom the most enterprising of our Sex had thought proper to leave undisturbed. Particular Circumstances it was that formed our Engagement.

I had just obtained a Regiment; and as my Father had for some Time lived retired upon his Estate in the Country, he had desired the Count of *Canaples*, who was our Relation, and who had a great Interest in the Army, to look a little to my Conduct, and to assist me with his Counsels.

The Count thought himself the more obliged to it, for that I owed to his Recommendation my Regiment, in Preference to older Officers, and who by their Services had deserved it better than me. His Maxim indeed was, that there could be nothing more contrary to good Order, than to put Boys at the Head of Commands, which was not then a rare Practice; he added, that after having spoke his Opinion

as a Patriot, upon this Abuse, he did not think himself obliged to be the Dupe of it neither, so as to have only his good Intentions for his Pains, without being sure of gaining much Esteem, or perhaps other than a great deal of Ridicule: Consequently he had acted strenuously in my Favour, and the Success of his Sollicitations gave him an Authority to recommend to me the justifying, by my Application to my Duty, the Favour he had obtained for me. Gratitude then obliged me to pay assiduously my Devoirs to him.

The Countess of *Canaples* received me at first with that Sort of Kindness which one shows to a little Relation, with whose Conduct one is in some Sort entrusted in the Eyes of the Public. My Docility towards their Advice augmented the Concern they took for what related to me; the Countess especially seemed every Day to throw more Tenderness into it. It is from Persons of a naturally serious Turn, that a kind Reception is the most sensible. I set myself then to do my best to please her: The Respect with which she inspired me, hindered me from perceiving the Impression she made on my Heart, but then it contributed to engrave it the deeper. Respect may constrain Love, may hide it, but never extinguishes, and often heightens it. Love is like those spirituous Liquors which the less they exhale, acquire the more Strength.

I had so little Experience that I never suspected the Situation of my Soul. I only felt that when I was not with her, I experienced a certain Inquietude more lively than afflicting, nor could I approach her without an Emotion, which put me out of myself. Our first Desires do not even manifest their Nature to us by Reflection, in the Moment that they agitate us; the more one feels, the less one thinks; it is from Memory that we afterwards reflect.

I passed near two Months in this delicious undeterminate Situation; solely taken up with a Desire of pleasing the Countess, and happy in that Desire, I was so attentive to penetrate and prevent her

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Will, that she could have no Advice to give me, but she heaped upon me lively, tender and ingenious Encomiums.

As I absolutely submitted my Conduct to her, I loved to give her an Account of it; I enjoyed a secret Satisfaction in discovering the Bottom of my Soul to her. I entered into Particulars of the most intimate, and I might say of the most frivolous Nature, if, by Questions that bore more the Air of Tenderness than of Curiosity, she had not made me sensible that the Trifles I communicated to her, were none of them indifferent to her. Those Particulars so trivial and despicable to Minds under the Chill of Insensibility, are Matter of Importance to those whom Love has united. This was precisely the State in which we found ourselves, before either of us were aware of it. We felt the quickest Love, we tasted those Pleasures of it, that are perhaps the most delicious, and surely the most rare, without ever having pronounced the Name of it.

One Day that the Countess and I were in the Midst of those Effusions of the Heart, which constituted our Happiness, I felt myself penetrated with a Transport before unknown, and then so new to me, that by a Vivacity of Sentiment more than of Reflection, I embraced the Countess, a Liberty I had never before that Instant taken: I held her for some Moments clasped in my Arms, and felt that I was pressed by hers. We looked at one another afterwards, without saying a Word, and what was singular enough, me it was who blushed; but she remarked it, and that Instant a Blush overspread her Face. She dejected her Eyes, sighed and fell into a profound Meditation. Still we did not on either Side utter one Syllable, and indeed, what could we have said in the Confusion of Ideas and Sentiments in which we both were? Our Action and the Agitation which followed upon it, produced all of a Sudden a Ray of Light, that opened our Eyes on the State of our Hearts; we discovered it at once together, and now we understood one another. In my Life I never ex-

perienced, at one Instant of Time, so much Pleasure, so much Pain, and so many opposite Sentiments, which it was for Love alone to re-unite and reconcile.

To recover myself and to make a Diversion in her Thoughts, I took her Hand which I kissed; I felt a feint Struggle from her to withdraw it. She left it however to me, whether she did not care to afflict me, or whether she was afraid that such a little Mark of Rigour might seem to me to lay too great a Stress on the Favour. Emboldened, or rather animated by this Action itself of mine, I pressed her Hand with my Lips, and fell at her Feet upon my Knees: The Countess at this, drawing back in a Fright, 'get up,' said she, 'I cannot conceive what you mean; I never saw you so much out of the Way.' 'Ah! Madam, said I, 'I myself should be puzzled to give you an Account of a Condition so perfectly new to me; all that I can say, is, that you are the only Person on Earth, who have made me experience it, and that I can imagine no Happiness but with you; may I flatter myself with being dear to you?' 'I have for you,' said she, 'the most tender Friendship, and I should be sorry you had not the same for me: You owe it me, and you are not capable of being ungrateful.' 'I am far indeed from being so,' replied I, 'and I can no longer dissemble to myself the having the most violent Love for you; I certainly was struck with it from the first Moment that I saw you, but, it is not till this Instant, that I find what it is.' 'Do you know what you are saying?' answered the Countess, 'you in Love with me? and what do you pretend from it?' To love you on,' said I. 'This goes too far, Sir,' said she, 'I cannot, nor I ought not to hear more of this; withdraw, I beg it of you, do not force me to repent the innocent Kindnesses I have showed you, and which another Word of this Sort from you, would render criminal ones.'

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I was so confounded with the involuntary Declaration I had just made, that I had not the Strength to reply; but I could not have had that of quitting her, if she had not called her Women, to whom she gave some Orders, that busied them necessarily, and for a Time, about her Person. I durst not then support the Presence of any Witness in the Agitation, easy to remark in all my Countenance. I left the Room therefore that Moment, charmed with getting alone to recover a Freedom of Breath, and of thinking upon what I had done.

This Situation was however so strange to me, that I could not clear up to myself, whether I ought to be satisfied, or displeased with what had happened to me; I was horribly in Pain for the Air of Resentment the Countess had shown me, but the Declaration I had dared to make her carried to my Heart a secret Consolation. A Passion concealed is a Load to sink under, from which a Declaration is a Relief, that proceeds from Hope, or gives Birth to it.

If the Countess had received the Declaration of mine with a cool Haughtiness, or a contemptuous Pleasantry, I had never dared to appear before her again: but the Fear she had shown a little diminished mine. I began to suspect that I was not absolutely without Merit, and as the Progress of Presumption is always rapid, I conceived the most flattering Hopes. My Confidence was not so regularly reasoned as I now paint it; the Operations of the Understanding are less quick than the Motions of the Heart, and of Self-Love, and a Passion is better guided by the Light of pure Sentiment, than by methodized Reflections. I burned with Impatience to see *Madam de Canaples* again. I went the next Day to her, and found her melancholy and cast down: I was pierced to the Heart at it, and told her so in the most tender Terms; but I durst not speak to her of my Passion; her Women scarce stirred out of the Room, and I thought I had too many Things to say to her that would not well bear an Interruption. In this State of Undecision I passed several Days, but

at length I forced myself to tell her, that independent of the Gratitude, and Attachment which I owed to her, she could not doubt but that the Passion with which she had inspired me, made me extremely sensible to the Condition in which I saw her. ' Alas!' said she with a Sigh, ' the principal Motive of the Concern you take in my Condition, is the very Motive that plunges me into it; you love me, that Love alone could of itself be a great Misfortune to me; but I love you, and that it is which consummates my Distress.' The Countess at these Words could not refrain her Tears; I immediately threw myself at her Feet, and would have embraced her Knees. ' Hold,' says she, repelling my Endeavours, ' the Declaration I have just made you is not a Favour: It is a violent Remedy to which I found myself obliged to have Recourse.

' In vain did I want to impose upon myself with respect to my Sentiments towards you; I am forced to see into their Nature: Why was it not in my Power to prevent them? but you became the Master of my Heart before I suspected it of being even sensible the little Disposition I have always had for Persons of your Age, my Contempt for their Follies and Presumption had appeared to me sufficient Arms against their Seduction; a natural Pride even hindered me from believing that I needed any Guard against them. Your Youth, the Graces of your Figure, and Understanding pleased without alarming me: I deemed you of no Consequence, and my Security has sold me: The Virtue indeed I remarked in you, and that Virtue alone ought to have given me a Suspicion of your being dangerous; but can one distrust what one esteems? yet is it that very Virtue that has seduced me; it concealed the Danger from me, whilst it suffered me to see, with too favourable a Sense, how amiable you were: Less virtuous, you had been less fatal to me. Let me at least think for my Consolation, that a Character like mine could not deviate from the Paths of Virtue, but through the Idea

that

' that I was pursuing Virtue. In short, I love you,
 ' and I pretend the less to hide it from you, for that
 ' I am clear, that I tell it you for the first and last
 ' Time of my Life; you are full dear to me then,
 ' but my Duty is still more so, and I stand in need
 ' of your assisting me to return to it; your Absence
 ' can alone restore my Tranquillity; you are to join
 ' your Regiment in a Month; I insist that you go
 ' to it immediately; your Impatience will appear
 ' natural, and nobody will suspect the true Motive
 ' of it.'

' What Madam,' said I, ' have you acquainted
 ' me with the most exalted Happiness, to which I
 ' could aspire, merely to render me at the same In-
 ' stant the most miserable of Men? No! I cannot
 ' obey you.' ' Yet,' said she, ' so it must be. You
 ' love me since you tell me so, and I believe you;
 ' your Soul is naturally sincere, and the World has
 ' not yet had the Time to corrupt its Candour: I
 ' judge then by the Sacrifice made by my own Heart,
 ' of what it must cost yours; but our Situations are
 ' widely different; you are going to find a Resource
 ' in a Diversity of Occupations and Objects. Dissi-
 ' pation destroys, or diverts the Passion of Love. For
 ' me in my Solitude, I shall perhaps be taken up
 ' with Thoughts of nothing but what I ought to for-
 ' get, and shall have no Support but the Necessity
 ' of my Duty, a Duty which rather adds new
 ' Cruelty to my Fate.' ' And why,' said I, ' Ma-
 ' dam, do you take it into your Head that your
 ' Duty is wounded by a Passion so pure? Why should
 ' you think yourself criminal for your Sensibility?
 ' are we the Masters of the Motions of our Heart?
 ' You are persuaded you say, of the Purity of my
 ' Soul; you ought to be so then of my having no
 ' Design to deceive you.'

' It signifies nothing,' said the Countess, ' to enter
 ' upon such a Discussion. Whether Reason or Preju-
 ' dice, I will not submit a Matter to any Examina-
 ' tion in which we are too much interested, you and
 ' I, to be the Judges. One rarely examines the
 ' Prin-

Principles of one's Duty, but from a Desire of exempting one's self from it, or to justify the having already violated it. There exist besides Rules of Conduct, which in vain are taxed of being Prejudices; I see there is no deviating from them without a Consciousness of Shame, and that is sufficient for me; there is no Need then of my examining whether they are reasonable, to know whether I ought to respect them. You say, you do not mean to deceive me; I do not think you have such a Design, but we may deceive ourselves; and indeed, of what can we be sure, when we cannot answer for our own Hearts? I have but little Experience in this Matter; but it has concerned me too nearly not to have carefully reflected upon it for some Days past; I have fortified my Reflections by the Example of Women who have lost themselves; who have, by Degrees, passed from a State of Virtue, to a State of Disorder. I see that Innocence has its Scruples. The first Faults occasion Remorse, consequent ones obliterate it, and one cannot be too soon afraid of one's self; you see the Bottom of my Heart; far then from Combating my Sentiments, adopt them, and aid me to strengthen myself in them. To secure then our Success in them, let us separate; I have said all that I think myself obliged to say to you. A longer Conversation could be but dangerous, and would begin to be criminal where it ceases to be necessary.

All the Time the Countess had continued speaking, I had remained under a Surprise which had kept me from interrupting her. But no sooner had she ended, than, shocked to Death at the Measure she wanted me to take, in that Moment that I thought my Happiness the most secure, I threw myself at her Feet, and tried to soften her, rather by Transports and the most passionate Protestations, than by cool Reasoning. 'Do not,' said she, 'attempt to melt me into Tenderness; my Heart is but too much disposed to it; show that you deserve this

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' Declaration by your respecting it. But should you
 ' abuse it, should I find myself too weak to resist
 ' your Urgencies, you will force me to have Re-
 ' course to the most violent of all Remedies, which
 ' might be accused of being romantic, and which
 ' is perhaps the only one that, from the Dignity of
 ' its Motive, can secure the Virtue of a Woman in
 ' such a Condition. Be assured then, that rather
 ' than expose myself to yield, it is to the Count *de*
 ' *Canaples* himself, to whom I would discover the
 ' State of my Heart, so that your Perseverance would
 ' be to no better Purpose, than to make three Per-
 ' sons unhappy; and such might be the Fruit of so
 ' violent a Step, that perhaps the least of those hurt
 ' by it, would be me, as I might find a Consolation
 ' for the Consequences of such an Action, in the
 ' Motives themselves that determined me to that
 ' Action. Let us then rather try on each Side to
 ' regain our Tranquillity. Go, and let the first Ef-
 ' fect of our Love be an Effort in Favour of Vir-
 ' tue.'

That Empire which the Respect of a Lover with
 Delicacy gives to a virtuous Woman, extends so far,
 as to subordinate to it the Transports of Love. I
 durst not then resist, and I withdrew, penetrated to
 the Heart with Affliction.

Uncertain however whether I ought, or not, to
 obey entirely the Countess, and willing to flatter
 myself that she might possibly take up more favour-
 able Sentiments, I went to her again the next Day.
 I found with her a Lady whom I did not know, and
 who appeared to me, to observe us with great At-
 tention. The Reception which the Countess gave
 me at first, had nothing in it very decisive one Way
 or another. After some indifferent Matters, she
 asked me when it was I proposed to set out, and up-
 on the Answer I made her, that I had not yet fixed
 a Day, the Air of her Countenance became succes-
 sively so serious, so cold, so haughty, that it went
 almost even the Length of an Indiscretion on her
 Side. As for me, I was cut down with it, and
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judging that I had nothing more to hope, scarce was this Visitant of hers gone out, but I told the Countess that I should set out the next Day.

The Count *de Canaples* who came in at that Instant, having heard what I said, there was no retracting it. He made me a Compliment upon my Zeal, and foretold from it that I should become an excellent Officer. I never however was less flattered with Encomiums, than I was at that Time with those of the Count. Yet afraid of destroying his good Opinion of me, by any Marks of ill Humour, or of giving him any Room to suspect the Truth, I went out to give Orders for my Departure. Those who never loved but moderately, may consider so prompt an Obedience as an Instance of a very slight Passion, but were they to deepen into the Knowledge of the Heart, they would judge better, and that nothing but the truest Love-passion is capable of such a Sacrifice. I was not then sensible that the Countess on her Part, made at least as violent an one as what she had exacted from me. Amongst Women even the most governed by Reason there is to them a great Way from the Danger of yielding to the Fear of it; from that Fear to the Desire of forcing themselves to fly an Occasion of it, from that Desire again to the Resolution, and a much greater Way yet from that Resolution to the Courage necessary to execute it.

The Countess of *Canaples* is the only Woman I have known capable of laying these Degrees into one, and clearing them all at one Exertion.

Whatever Desire I had of taking a private Leave, I could not once find her alone, and she was Mistress enough of herself not to give me any Advantage over her, in my parting Compliments.

My first Adventure, it is plain, could not teach me to despise Women; but it taught me to esteem myself, and that is a Science easy to learn. I have had since, as much as any one, what is called, Successes in Gallantry, but none of them ever flattered me

me so sensibly, as the Impression I had made on the Heart of Madam *de Canaples*.

Since the Intoxication of my Passions has been dissipated, I have sometimes reflected upon the Nature of the Conquests which feed the Vanity of our Sex, and I have remarked, that most of the Women who are the Subjects of its Triumph, have a cold Heart, their Sensations Tranquil enough, and a dis-tempered Head; it is not Reason that determines their Choice; it is not Love; it is not even Pleasure; it is Folly that warms their Imagination for some Man who becomes successively the Object, the Accomplish, and the Victim of their Whim. A Lover often pleases them, for no other Reason but the having presented himself the first, and is soon quitted for a second, who has no other Merit but that of presenting himself the last.

I had set out on my Journey with a Heart full of Love, and penetrated with Affliction. But I had scarce come into the Army, when the Duties of my Station employed me sufficiently to make a Diversion in my Sentiments, and other Dissipations soon completed the Return of my Gaiety. I found myself in a few Days the intimate Friend of a Number of Persons of my own Age, who had never seen me before. It was, in my acquaintance with them, that I learned the Theory of that Life in which I was to make so shining a Figure, I heard amongst them, of nothing but Women distracted for them, of Women sacrificed the one to the other, and often to Humour or Fancy; it was not, but through an Excess of Modesty, they mentioned those they had seduced, because that Seduction supposed at least some previous Courtship. I could not be reconciled to myself, for my Wonder, at the Innocence in which I had lived till then, and which I durst not own. I was jealous of what I heard, ashamed of having nothing like it to relate of myself, and as yet too ingenious to invent or impose any Stories of that Sort. But I determined firmly within myself, to do as much to be talked of, as any of them, on my
Return

Return from the Army, and that it should not at least be my Fault, if I did not obtain the same Advantages to make a Parade of, in the Course of the next Campaign.

I am since persuaded, that if even then, I would have availed myself of my Imagination, towards putting myself on a Footing with the rest, by Dint of Fiction, however awkwardly I might have gone about it for Want of Experience; those who would have the most doubted of the Truth of my Boasts, would not have dared to have openly confessed it, for Fear of giving me the Hint of suspecting that their Adventures were not a Jot more real. I know nothing so much in the Interest of Coxcombry in one, as Coxcombry in another.

As soon as the Army separated, I returned to Court, and my first Visit was to Madam *de Canaples*. The Lessons which I had received, the Stories which I had learned upon Women, and which I believed as firmly as if I had been a Witness to them, the Reflections I had made in Consequence of them, all concurred to inspire me with a Confidence, of which I promised to myself to make due Advantage. I presented myself before her with an Air, rather more unembarrassed than I had had when I had left her; and I was received by her with a tender Friendship, the Expressions of which were a little perplexed, without being so much so as to give any Suspicion; I tried to answer them upon the familiar Strain. But whether she threw too much Awe into her Countenance, or whether I could not conquer the Habit of respecting her; I could not endeavour to shake off that Respect, without finding a Constraint come upon me, in Proportion, which produced the same Effect. I was so awkward in my Freedoms; I had so ill a Grace in my Airs of Presumption, that I myself was sensible of it, and finding no Glimpse of Hope from the obstinate Struggles I had within my Heart, I even gave up the Point, and submitted to the Ascendant she had obtained over me. I continued then to make my Court to her on that Footing. But in Pleasures

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asures and Dissipations, it was that I sought to make a Diversion from the Love which I continued to feel for her, and I renounced at Length a hopeless Pursuit.

In the Age I then was, the Pleasures of Love mimic the Sentiment of it, and hinder one's being too much tormented with it; I resolved then to give myself up to all Occasions of it that should offer, and I was soon as much in the thickest of them as I could wish. The Reception I met with, the Facility of the Conquests which I had so ardently desired, which I had thought difficult, and which I yet felt, of great Importance to my Happiness, all gave me a high Opinion of myself. I concluded from thence that *Madam de Canaples* had either not loved me at all, or was capable of loving but slightly, since she had withheld from me those Proofs of it, of which I found others so liberal. I was far from thinking that there was any other Distinction between Woman and Woman but that of Figure or Youth.

It may be remembered, that the Day I took Leave of *Madam de Canaples*, I had seen with her a Woman who was a Stranger to me. I soon got acquainted with her in the World, and from herself I learned the Motive of her Visit. It was the Marchioness *de Rhetel*. Her Person was inviting, and it was hardly possible to have more Wit, or less Morals than she had, or more Contempt for the Decencies of Life, though she did not withal want for Probity. Nobody, in short, ever preserved more Candour in the Midst of her Vices. The first Supper at which we met, began our Acquaintance, and established our Intimacy. She began with asking me, 'if I continued my Affiduities to *Madam de Canaples*,' and added, without waiting for my Answer, 'that she had pronounced that our Commerce could not last long, for that the Character of a Prude did not sympathise enough with that of a handsome gay young Fellow like me.' I was at first surprized with such an Attack, and I answered her about *Madam de Canaples* with all the

Respect

Respect which I owed her. I had yet some Virtue left, and it is not before the having long renounced it, that one can bring one's self to talk the Language of Vice.

Upon this Decency of my Answer, the Marchioness said, ' It is at least perfectly right in you, to keep Measures in speaking of a Lady, with whom you have lived : Besides, Candour is the Virtue of Youth. The Countess too is of a Character to take it well of you, if it should come to her Ears. Others would not much mind it either Way, and as to me to whom this Discretion can do neither Good nor Harm, I esteem you neither the more nor the less for it. I own to you that Curiosity it was, which made me pay a Visit to Madam *de Canaples* upon a Pretext of the slightest. I had heard of her having a Jewel with her, of which she was Choice, and kept from the World ; that Jewel it seems was you, and I had a Mind to judge of it by my own Eyes. I found you there, and applauded her Taste on her Happiness, but you was not made to bury yourself in Prudery, at your coming into the World. The Countess ought not take it ill, or think it strange that you should have left her, and she will always have the Honour to be at the Head of your History.' ' In all Events,' said I, ' Madam, her Friendship will do me an Honour, and she will never have Reason to blush for her Goodness to me.' ' How blush !' said the Marchioness, ' she has nothing but to be vain of in it.' And with this she run on with so many Encomiums upon me, and those so unguarded with Reserve ; so fullsome, in short, that she must of the two have inspired me with Indignation against her, or with Admiration of myself. I chose the last. The Men of the finest Sense are often the Dupes of as coarse a Bait, presented even by Fools ; was it then for a young presumptuous Head like mine, not to give Way to the Intoxication ?

Though nothing escaped me which could affect the Honour of Madam *de Canaples*, or that could in-

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sinuate that she owed my Reserve to my Discretion, a Finesse so much the more criminal, that a Man thereby usurps a Reputation of Probity, whilst the Character of a Lady is not the less blasted; the Marchioness remained persuaded that I had been what is called perfectly well with *Madam de Canaples*. Women given up to Disorder, do not believe Adventures, because they are informed of them, but because they suppose them; it is less from the Penetration of their Understanding, than from the Corruption of their Heart, that they sometimes guess right. They cannot entertain other Ideas, as how should they have Faith in Virtue, who have themselves no Principles of it, and judge of others from their own Conduct, and from that of others like themselves?

The Conversation I had that Day with *Madam de Rhetel*, or rather that she had with me, was a very extensive one. Her Ideas appeared at first so odd and novel, that I was only struck with their Singularity, but in a little Time she brought me to the Point of conceiving her Principles.

She did not wait for my asking her Permission to visit her, she ordered it me, and I went there the next Day. I found her alone, and as if she had been afraid of losing any Time in the Education she designed for me, she entered immediately upon Essentials.

I have already said that she had a great deal of Wit, I ought to add that she had reflected a great deal; I would not take upon me to decide whether all her Ideas were just, but they appeared to me methodized into a System. It is then to enable the Reader to judge of them at one View, that I throw into one Conversation the Sum of what she said to me in several, upon different Occasions, and according as she found me disposed to relish her Opinions or Principles of Life.

‘ Confess to me,’ said she, ‘ that the World you now live with, and for which you are made, is better than the sober, sad private Audiences of *Madam de Canaples*.’ ‘ I shall,’ said I, ‘ *Madam*, confess

‘ felf to you a very different Truth, which is that I
‘ fought for no Happinefs but with her; and that
‘ but for my Fear of disturbing her’s, I fhould yet be
‘ a Stranger to that World, for which you think me
‘ fo admirably formed.’

‘ But, this is too rich,’ faid the Marchionefs, ‘ do
‘ you know that the few Words you have faid, com-
‘ prehend fomething fo incredible! fo prodigious!
‘ for in fhort, if I underftand you right, or if you
‘ yourfelf underftand the Force of what you fay, you
‘ muft not only be in love, but, once more, in love,
‘ in downright earneft with Madam *de Canaples*, and
‘ ſhe infenfible to it, two Articles of which either is
‘ incredible by itfelf, and taken both together com-
‘ pofe a Prodigy.’ ‘ There is however,’ faid I, ‘ no-
‘ thing fo fure.’ I love Madam *de Canaples*, and cannot
bring her to love me.’ I had ftuck more to Truth,
if, in doing Juftice to her Virtue, I had painted her
lefs infenfible; but the Love I preferved for her,
made me refpect her Secret: Such a Confidence
would have appeared criminal to me: True Love
is almoft a Virtue, and when one feels it, all Cox-
combry vanifhes. ‘ How,’ faid the Marchionefs,
‘ this Lady would not accept of you; and do
‘ you ferioufly believe, that you would have really
‘ difpleafed her, if you had obliged her to renounce
‘ a Prudery which was no doubt very irkfome to
‘ herfelf? In truth, one learns every Day fomething
‘ new; fee here an odd unaccountable Effect of
‘ Love! And you believe, do you, in this fame
‘ Love? ‘ I believe,’ faid I, ‘ that it is the firft and
‘ ftrongeft of our Paflions.’ – ‘ You have,’ faid the
‘ Marchionefs, ‘ very falfe Ideas of Love.

‘ The Paflions which agitate Mankind, explain and
‘ unfold themfelves in their Hearts before they have
‘ the leaft Notion of Love. Anger, Envy, Pride,
‘ Avarice, Ambition, all thefe manifeft themfelves in
‘ Men from their Infancy; the Objects in them are
‘ little, but they are thofe of that Age. Thofe Paflions
‘ are not more violent too, but when their Ob-

‘ jects

jects are more important; often they are not so lively, and if one of them becomes in Time stronger than it was at first, it is commonly by the Extinction of the others which had shared the Soul with it.

Love makes itself sensible to us at a certain age; but is it any Thing else than a Portion of the general Taste which Men have for Pleasure? The Age in which it is at the Height of its Triumph, is that in which the other Passions have no Opportunity of exercising their Sway: In an Age in which one is insensible to Avarice, because one has no Property; to Ambition, because one is of no Consequence. The other Passions do not display themselves but when they have proper Food for them; but if once they are put into Motion, they soon overpower that of Love. This Passion destroys itself by Use, whilst the others strengthen by it, and is limited to one Season of Life, whilst the others extend through the whole Course of it: Love, in short, is one of our Wants, as keen, and less frequent than the others. It is rarely a Passion; sometimes a weak one; and of all Pleasures the shortest: The Pleasure of it too often depends upon Fashion. Have there not been Times when Table-Chear convened together Men only, and when Women were reckoned for nothing in that Society of which they are at present the Life and Soul, less through the Love of them than through Fashion?

If the Sense of Love is exceeding lively, the Sentiment of it is exceeding rare: One often supposes it where it is not; one often ingenuously imagines that one is sensible of it, till undeceived by Experience. How many has not one seen seemingly carried away by the most violent Passion, who believe themselves ready to sacrifice their Life for a Woman, and who perhaps would have done it, as one executes in a drunken Fit what one would not defend sober? How many do I say, has not one seen sacrifice this same Woman to Ambition,

to

' to Avarice, to Vanity, to a fashionable Air ? Other
 ' Passions subsist upon their respective Aliment ; Love
 ' stands in need of a Spice of Contradiction that shall
 ' associate Self-Love to it for its Support. There
 ' are, it may be said, Lovers who sacrifice every Thing
 ' to their Passion ; that may happen because there is
 ' nothing that does not happen ; for where is that
 ' Passion, where is that Taste, serious or frivolous,
 ' that has not its Fanaticks ? Musick, Hunting, even
 ' Study, and a thousand other Objects may become
 ' respectively the sole Passion of one Person, and shut
 ' up his Heart against all others ; so it may be of
 ' Love, which is never the first Passion, and rarely
 ' the only one.

' Those great and rare Sacrifices too of the Heart
 ' are scarce ever seen but on the Side of the Woman ;
 ' almost all the generous Procedures belong to them
 ' in Love, and often in Friendship, especially when
 ' it has succeeded to Love. Now do not imagine
 ' that what I here say to the Advantage of my Sex
 ' springs from a personal Concern ; I do not so much
 ' as mean it greatly to the Praise of Women, that
 ' they have the Soul more sensible, more sincere,
 ' and more courageous in Love than the Men ; it
 ' is the Fruit of their Education, if one may call
 ' by the Name of Education, the Care taken to
 ' breed a Softness in their Hearts and an Emptiness
 ' in their Heads, which produce all their Misguidan-
 ' ces. Women are scarce open to any Impressions
 ' but those of Love, because Men are solicitous to
 ' inspire them with no others : Having no Hold up-
 ' on them in Affairs, they can only know them in
 ' their Connexions of Pleasure. Thus most Women
 ' in the World pass their Lives in being successively
 ' flattered, spoiled, seduced, cast off, and at length
 ' left upon their own Hands without other but one
 ' only Resource, that of a Devotion of mere Prac-
 ' tice, and full tiresome when without Virtue, with-
 ' out Fervour, and without some Party-Zeal of Re-
 ' ligion.

' Love, it is said, is the Business of those who have
 ' no Business. Disoccupation then is the Mother-
 ' Spring

‘ Spring of the Mistakes of Conduct into which Love
 ‘ throws the Women: This Passion produces few
 ‘ Effects worth Notice in those Women in low Life,
 ‘ as much taken up as the Men of that Class in hard
 ‘ Work; though there are many of them plunged
 ‘ into Vice, not from any Instigation of the Heart,
 ‘ rarely from a Taste of Pleasure, and almost always
 ‘ by their Indigence; but I am speaking here only of
 ‘ those who have a certain Rank in the World, or of
 ‘ those whom Opulence or Idleness have placed with-
 ‘ in the Reach of assuming their Manners.

‘ The Education of Men, all imperfect as it is,
 ‘ both in its Object and Method, has at least the
 ‘ Advantage of employing them, of filling their
 ‘ Heads with Ideas good or bad, but which make a
 ‘ Diversion from the Sentiments of the Heart. Af-
 ‘ fairs, Employs, or Occupations of some Sort or
 ‘ another succeed to their Education, and leave to
 ‘ Love only a Place subordinate to other Passions.
 ‘ What they call Love is the Use of certain Pleasures
 ‘ which they seek by Fits, which they at first seize
 ‘ with Ardour, which they vary from Distaste or In-
 ‘ constancy, and to which they are obliged to re-
 ‘ nounce when those Pleasures cease to be convenient
 ‘ to them, or themselves are no longer fit for those
 ‘ Pleasures.’ Here I could not help interrupting the
 ‘ Marchioness; I was so scandalized to hear a fine
 ‘ Woman and still young, profess a kind of Atheism
 ‘ in Love, that I thought myself concerned in Ho-
 ‘ nour to combat her Opinion. ‘ How!’ said I,
 ‘ Madam, can one doubt of the Power of Love? To
 ‘ be sensible of it, it is sufficient for me to have be-
 ‘ fore experienced it, and now again to be exposed
 ‘ to it with yourself; but independent of my own
 ‘ private Experience, I hear of nothing more fre-
 ‘ quently than of Connexions formed by Love, and
 ‘ which a long Serious of Years has rendered respect-
 ‘ able, without having weakened them.’

‘ I know,’ said the Marchioness, ‘ and I have ex-
 ‘ amined with Attention those Connexions of which
 ‘ so much is said; some of them there are who de-
 ‘ serve

' serve the Praises bestowed upon them; they are
 ' those whom Love may have begun, but whom
 ' Friendship has consecrated. And I know some
 ' who have not ceased to be plagued with Storms,
 ' till the Passion of Love was extinguished. These
 ' were those of Lovers, who sometimes inebriated
 ' with Pleasures, and the Instant after tormented with
 ' Whim, Fits of jealous Humour, or false Delicacies,
 ' passed often one and the same Day in Caresses, in
 ' Piques, in Asperities, in Offences and Pardons, and in
 ' mutually tyrannizing over one another; after having
 ' worn out the Pleasures and the Pains of Love, these
 ' Lovers have at Length happily found out, that there
 ' was Worth enough on each Side to deserve their
 ' being Friends, and from that Instant it is that they
 ' live happy, as such, with a more entire Confidence,
 ' than they would perhaps have had, if they had ne-
 ' ver been Lovers, and with more Sweetness and
 ' Tranquillity, than if they still were so.

' A State so rare and so delicious, might be the
 ' Charm of an advanced Age, and hinder one from
 ' regretting Youth; Reflection which destroys or
 ' weakens other Pleasures, because they consist in a
 ' certain Inebriation, augments, and confirms that of
 ' such a Friendship. In the Enjoyment of a Happi-
 ' ness, it is doubling it, to dwell upon with a full
 ' Sense of it.

' As to those antient Connections which the Pub-
 ' lic is so kind to respect, for want of knowing the
 ' Inside of them, what would they not lose by being
 ' examined into? what would be seen in them, but
 ' Persons who continue to live together, because
 ' they have long lived together? The Force of Ha-
 ' bit, the Inability of living single, the Difficulty of
 ' forming new Connections, the Awkwardness of re-
 ' embarking in Society to which they are Strangers;
 ' each, and all these often retain Lovers from break-
 ' ing old Engagements, and give even to a State
 ' of the dullest Weariness, an Air of Constancy.
 ' They are become unable to please others, and
 ' thence are now necessary to one another, they can-
 ' not

' not part, and often they dare not part ; they are
 ' obliged to keep up their dismal and disgustful Uni-
 ' on, from human Respects. Such is the Case, when
 ' after choosing one another, from a Taste of Love,
 ' they have made Proclamation of their Happiness,
 ' they have contracted an Engagement before the
 ' Public, and have had Occasions to ratify it so-
 ' lemnly, and with Eclat. But alas ! the Charm dis-
 ' sipates in Time, the Illusion ceases ; they had each
 ' looked on the other as perfect Characters, and they
 ' come to find themselves not even estimable ones ;
 ' they repent but dare not own so much, and from
 ' a Spirit of Obstinacy, continue to live together in
 ' a State of mutual Detestation. Thus human Respect
 ' hinders as many Ruptures as the Law prohibits
 ' Divorces. If Divorces were legal, the same Man
 ' who would solicit a Riddance from his Wife,
 ' would not in the same Circumstances break with
 ' his Mistress, but stick to her as to an inveterate Ha-
 ' bit. He would not blush at freeing himself from
 ' a confessed Slavery, who would be ashamed at a
 ' Recantation of the Happiness he had once paraded
 ' in, of a voluntary Engagement.

' Those lasting Connections exact, towards Hap-
 ' piness, more estimable Qualities, than is generally
 ' imagined. Love supplies the Place of every Thing
 ' to Lovers ; its Object is all-sufficient to it. But
 ' that Object fades, Love goes out, and Wit or sheer
 ' Sense alone has not Fecundity enough to replace
 ' the Illusion, or become a Preservative against the
 ' Languor of a retired Life, or of a continual Duet.
 ' But, if Wit and Sense, had even that Power, they
 ' must exist in the same Degree, in both Lovers ;
 ' otherwise the Barrenness of the one would stifle the
 ' Fertility of the other. It is for Wit alone to serve
 ' for any Length of Time, for Culture to Wit. It
 ' does not long yield alone.

' The Privacy of Lovers, such as I suppose a plea-
 ' surable one, cannot support itself, but through
 ' Friendship, through great reciprocal Esteem, and
 ' that entire Confidence, from which one enjoys the

‘ Presence of the other, even when one says nothing
 ‘ to one another, or when differently employed ; it
 ‘ would not be a bad Advice to Lovers who have
 ‘ declared themselves publickly upon that Footing,
 ‘ to make a Provision of Virtues to fill up any Inci-
 ‘ dent void of Love.

‘ It is thought that Men in an advanced Age are
 ‘ more constant than Youth, but this Constancy is
 ‘ but an outside Show. In an elderly Age its Fears
 ‘ anticipate its Wants ; its Experience makes it guard
 ‘ against a Privation of its Delights. Thus it enjoys
 ‘ with Inquietude, and does not care to part with
 ‘ what it is not always sure of finding again. Youth
 ‘ has little forethought of Wants, it feels only De-
 ‘ sires ; these are extinguished by Enjoyment, and
 ‘ soon revive again. Youth desires ardently, enjoys
 ‘ confidently, and leaves one Mistress without Fear,
 ‘ because it easily gets another. This is the true
 ‘ Secret of the Levity of one Age, and of the Con-
 ‘ stancy of the other.

All that the Marchioness said to me, more and
 more augmented my Surprize ; had her System been
 true, I was not yet disposed to admit of it : There
 are Principles of which the Demonstration is not suf-
 ficient to Conviction ; in Matters of Sentiment, one
 believes only what one Desires. I still loved Ma-
 dam *de Canaples*, and was still sensible, or imagined
 myself so, that my Heart required that Passion to
 fill it, and that I should not cease to love her, till
 I could love another ; I was not long before I unde-
 ceived myself. The Marchioness had undertaken
 my Conversion, and Thanks to her Cares, I was soon
 cured of all my primitive Probity of Sentiments,
 as the Course of these Memoirs will shew. But it is
 necessary that I should recite the Remainder of the
 Lessons which she gave me, and of which she took
 the Pains to inculcate, and refresh the Tenour, till
 she believed me sufficiently confirmed in what she
 thought right Principles.

The Light she placed Things in to me, were so
 new to me, that, in order to remove my Scruples
 and

and clear up my Ideas, I proposed my Doubts. ' I own,' said I, ' Madam, that you have made me not to know what to think of Love ; pray, in what is it that you make it consist ?'

' Nothing,' replied the Marchioness, ' is easier to satisfy than your Question. To love, is competent to Friendship ; but to desire the Enjoyment of an Object, is what is simply called Love ; to desire that Object exclusively of all others, is the Passion of Love. The first Sentiment is always a Good ; the second is only an Appetite of Pleasure ; the third, and the keenest, augments the Pleasure, and lays the Foundation of Pains. Friendship, and the Love-Passion have this in common, that they are both determined towards a particular Object, though from different Motives ; there are even Friendships which become real Passions, and they are neither the securest nor the happiest.

' Love, on the contrary, such as it commonly exists, impels vaguely and undeterminately towards a Variety of Objects, and can always replace one by another ; you will say, that such a Love is not very delicate. No, but it is happy, and Happiness it is that constitutes the Glory of Love.

' Delicacy does one Honour in Friendship, because it supposes a clear-sighted Sentiment, as flattering for him who feels, as for him who inspires it ; this Delicacy is always active, and inclines one to be serviceable to the Friend so beloved ; one is afraid of appearing wanting to him ; in Love that Delicacy is extremely passive ; the pretended delicate Lover has no Object but himself ; he fancies all the Return is not made him which he deserves, and torments himself that he may torment another. What must be the Torture of two Lovers if they are both possessed with the same Caprice at once ?

' Delicate Minds are under a double Misfortune ; they are painfully affected with the least Thing that hurts or seems to hurt what they call Sentiment ; they are too difficult in their Pleasure ; they cannot

‘ taste it if there remains any Scruple upon the Principle or Motive from which it proceeds ; and unhappily they are but too ingenious in forming those Scruples.

‘ The Delicacy then so boasted and so little known, is at best but a Distemper of the Imagination : One would think it whets the Understanding only to give it the falser Edge.

‘ Yet, as if the Task had been set to poison all the Pleasures of Love, not contented with introducing Delicacy, they have moreover taken into it the Plague of Jealousy.’

Here I could not help breaking out into an Exclamation : ‘ How !’ said I, ‘ is not Jealousy an Attribute of Love ?’ ‘ Undoubtedly not,’ answered the Marchioness ; ‘ Jealousy is a Prejudice of Education strengthened by Custom : If Jealousy was natural to Lovers, it would not be local, they would be every where equally jealous ; whereas there are Countries in which they are much less so than in others ; there are some where they are not so at all, and whose Manners are absolutely opposed to it ; where that passes for an Honour which amongst us would be the Height of Infamy. Even in one and the same Nation one sees upon this Article very different Manners, according to the different Ranks and Conditions of it. For Example, at Court one is not so susceptible of Jealousy as in the City ; Jealousy is reckoned the Ridicule of a Citizen. There are to be found even Citizens reasonable, polite, well-bred, or Fops enough not to be jealous ; for one may get cured of one Species of Folly not only by Reason, but by a contrary Folly. But if the Prejudice itself was levelled, there would still remain some who would be jealous ; but then these would be only such as were constitutionally so ; as Jealousy or Envy is in some a constitutional Vice, like Ambition, Avarice, Indolence, Misanthropy, and various other Characters.

‘ Jealousy has so little of a natural Sentiment in it, that it submits to the Power of Prejudice in the
‘ Exer-

‘ Exercise of its Influence. Thus the same Man who
 ‘ would be jealous even to Frenzy of a Rival, scarce
 ‘ takes it into his Head to be at all so of a Husband :
 ‘ The Jealous are internally so persuaded of their In-
 ‘ justice, that there are few who do not endeavour
 ‘ to conceal their being so.

‘ Jealousy it is commonly believed, is a Mark of
 ‘ great Love ; but Experience proves, that the most
 ‘ violent Love is generally the least suspicious : Jeal-
 ‘ ousy only implies a weak Passion, a foolish Pride,
 ‘ a forced Consciousness of one’s Want of Merit,
 ‘ and sometimes a bad Heart. For Example, how
 ‘ often has one seen a Lover tired and disgusted with
 ‘ his Mistress, seeking for a Pretext to break with
 ‘ her, and trying to procure one by Dint of ill-na-
 ‘ tured Proceedings ? One would think, that in such
 ‘ a Situation, he would be charmed with any one’s
 ‘ intervening who should honourably disengage him.
 ‘ No ; if he perceives that she can comfort herself
 ‘ for his Loss with another, his Vanity is hurt,
 ‘ because he cannot leave a Woman a Prey to her
 ‘ Regrets ; Jealousy or rather Envy brings him back
 ‘ to play the Tyrant without being himself happy.
 ‘ Such are the Men ; their Love lives but by Self-
 ‘ Love ; all their Jealousy is Pride.’

Though the Arguments used by the Marchioness
 were not perhaps over strictly just, I did not find I
 was able to refute them ; but I thought I could not
 do better than to bring the Application Home to her-
 self. ‘ How ! said I, ‘ Madam, if I had attempted
 ‘ to make myself agreeable to you, and had succeed-
 ‘ ed in the Attempt, would you like that I should be
 ‘ wanting to you in Point of Constancy ?

‘ Why not ?’ said the Marchioness, Inconstancy is
 ‘ a Word of mighty Sound, and often very ill ap-
 ‘ plied : In Friendship indeed it is a Crime ; but if
 ‘ we were ever to take a Taste for one another, I
 ‘ would not pretend to be the only Object of your
 ‘ Attentions : Such a Pretension would be at once a
 ‘ Tyranny insupportable to you, and a cruel Folly
 ‘ to

to myself. Let us ever enjoy a Happiness as if it was never to end, and let us know how to part with it as having no Right to it.

Do you imagine that I never had an Occasion of attaching myself as weakly as many others? Yes; I owe perhaps a Part of my Philosophy to my own Experience; I made my Reflections early upon this Subject, and in consequence of them formed to myself my present Plan of Life; I set myself to improve my Understanding rather with pleasurable than painful Knowledge, and such as might be capable of hindering Solitude or old Age from giving me any direful Apprehensions; I have studied to defend my Heart from all tyrannic Passion, and to taste those Pleasures allowed me by the Manners now in reign.

Not that I approve those Manners; if they were to become more regular, all the World would be a Gainer by the Reform; but if that does not take place, let the Men blame none but themselves; let them either cease to exclaim against this Torrent of Disorder, or cease to believe that there is a different Morality for the two Sexes. I know with what contempt they talk amongst themselves of those Women they appear the most to respect: This Knowledge would be the best Lesson a young Person could be taught, and such a Contempt would be often just on the Side of the Men, if they did not themselves deserve the like.

I do not seek, as you see, to deceive myself either with Regard to the Men or the Women, and I say freely what I think, because the Opinion of others moves me not in the least; I know I do not please all the World, but that does not hinder me from my being well received in it. The Men do not deserve any Delicacy on our Part about their Sentiments, it is enough that their Procedure is Satisfactory. I busy myself with those who please me, and take Care not to torment myself about those whom I may chance to please. The Frankness of my Conduct drives even Female Scandal to a Stand; the Wo-

men

' men scarce employ themselves but in unveiling hid-
 ' den Faults, and I dissemble nothing; besides they
 ' are afraid of my using Reprizals, and that in un-
 ' masking them, I should make appear that the only
 ' Difference between them and me is their Falsity; I
 ' do not think I should take the Trouble of it, but
 ' they fear it, and that is enough to secure their let-
 ' ting me alone; I desire no more of them, for I do
 ' not pretend to their Friendship; since besides my
 ' doubting whether one Woman can be sincerely the
 ' Friend of another Woman, she ought always to pre-
 ' fer the Friendship of the Men; there is more Con-
 ' stancy, more Security and less Constraint in it; and
 ' the Men ought to think that of the Women the
 ' most agreeable. I have Friends, and I deserve to
 ' have them, because I am incapable of Falsity to
 ' them; I respect Friendship so much, as to be more
 ' difficult in it than in Love, and the greatest Ho-
 ' nour I could do a Lover who should cease to be
 ' agreeable to me as such, would be to continue him
 ' for my Friend.'

If I observed some Singularity in the Ideas of
 the Marchioness, I observed withal some Sentiments
 in her which pleased me, and insensibly I at-
 tached myself to her. For some Time she appeared
 to be taken up entirely with me, but I soon discerned
 that if she had furnished me with Preservatives
 against Jealousy, she knew very well I should stand in
 need of them with her. However, she had Reason
 to be satisfied with my Conduct; I had so well adopt-
 ed her System that we had nothing to reproach one
 another, and without coming to any formal Separation,
 we found ourselves free and disengaged: I gave
 myself up then to every transient Taste; in short,
 I had from my natural Character a Turn to Sensi-
 bility, but I became a Coxcomb by Principles.

My first Successes had inspired me with Vanity,
 but the Multiplicity of them cured me of it: I shall
 not descend here into particularized Portraits of all
 the Women in Fashion who fell to me; their Character
 and Conduct are uniform; he who has had

one, may say he knows them all; their Number can only serve to swell the Lists of such who are possessed with the Folly of making Lists. When Women of this Sort take a Man in their Heads, they make all the Advances as if they were nothing; when they have had their Fancy out, they deny them as if they were a great deal: There is then no poor, no stale Artifice of which they do not avail themselves; they begin by insinuating that the Man who has been well with them, *has only given himself the Air of it; — he would be the last Person they would choose; — they cannot conceive how any one could have him*; by Degrees they pass on to more abusive Detraction, if however they can abuse; they suppose that no one will believe they could speak so of a Man from whom they had any Thing to fear; they never once think, that they are the only Persons in the World who imagine that they have any Thing left of a Reputation to lose: When one hears those Declamations, one knows immediately what to trust to; one would learn it from them if one was ignorant before.

This Excess of Impudence is however not wholly useless to them; it does not indeed dissuade, but it over-bears and obliges one to dissemble in their Presence the Contempt one has for them; yet they are often much in the Wrong to be so violently afraid of Indiscretion, for there are who would willingly keep their having them a Secret, who have been obliged to have them in their own Defence.

I had then too many Rivals in my Way of Happiness for me to be able to flatter myself with acting a distinguished Part, so that I set myself to emerge from the vulgar Level by more splendid Conquests, and I had the good Fortune to succeed in them.

The Lady whom I had the Address to please, was extremely sensible to Tenderness, highly turned to Love, but jealous to an Excess of her Reputation; she yielded only to the Esteem with which I had the Art to inspire her. There was even on my Side a Procedure of Vanity which turned to my Advantage; Madam *de Clerval* had put several Questions to me

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between Jest and Earnest concerning the Mistresses which the Publick had allowed me, but as I thought they did not do me Honour enough to take to myself much Glory from them, I disowned them absolutely, and all of them: This, which in Truth, was the Effect of my Coxcombry, *Madam de Clerval* placed to the Account of a Probity both delicate and rare to be met with in our Sex; besides my Adventures had been too publick for her to doubt of them; so that she imputed the Noise they had made, to the Giddiness and Indiscretion of the Women who had been the Heroines of them, and thence conceived the highest Idea of the Discretion I should have for a Woman who should deserve it, since I pushed it to such a Length, for those Women who respected themselves the least. This Way of reasoning which proved her Candour more than her Experience, was what betrayed her to me.

My Urgency becoming every Day more pressing, she owned to me, that she entertained the most tender Sentiments for me, and that I owed them principally to her being perswaded of my Probity and Discretion; I seized that Moment to confirm her in her Opinion. I employed an Eloquence, a Vivacity, in short such Exaggerations as accomplished her Seduction, and which alone ought to have guarded her against me, had she had more Knowledge of the Character of our Sex.

The Confession she had made me, is what comes the hardest from Minds of real Honour, and when Women of this Character are to yield, the Consequences of such a Confession are more rapid, than with others. *Madam de Clerval* then trusted to my Oaths; not but from Time to Time she suffered the quickest Remorse, or at least Scruples of Honour, which alarmed her for her Reputation. I re-incouraged her by a thousand Protestations, which somewhat calmed, without restoring to her a perfect Tranquillity, and I own her Inquietudes were not groundless. Though I was yet incapable of a Breach in Form of the Oaths I had made, I behaved with a

Carelessness that was tantamount to an Indiscretion. My Sentiments were not only not so quick-spirited and delicate as hers, but as she was the first Woman whose Weakness could flatter my Vanity, I should have been overjoyed with having that perceived, which I durst not speak out, and with such Dispositions, one says nothing, and makes known every Thing. I cannot here deny myself the placing two Reflections, which I have often since made: The first, that it is against the Laws of Honour to aim at winning the Heart of a Woman, with whom one is not violently in Love. There are some who would resist an Inclination, who would even triumph over a Passion, if they had not been betrayed into a Right to flatter themselves with having inspired an equal one; and there are abandoned Women who would never have had but one Passion, if the Object of it had been a Man of Honour. After finding themselves betrayed, they are distracted with Remorse, or lose that Remorse by Dint of deserving more. Certain it is, that Love can never procure to a Woman of Worth, so much Happiness as it makes her lose; so that a Man of true Honour ought never to render her the Victim of a Light or transient liking.

My second Reflection turns upon the different Sorts of Perfidy; there is one which consists in blackening, through an atrocious Calumny, the Character of a Woman, whose Disdain one may have experienced; this Villainy is, I believe, very rare. There is another common enough, or betraying by Indiscretion, and through a ridiculous Vanity, the Secret and Favours of an unfortunate Woman, and whom Gratitude or Honour ought to have obliged one to respect. The third Sort of Perfidy more despicable yet than the second, consists in *acting* Indiscretion; in revealing by one's Conduct, what one affects to conceal; in letting Things be seen into, in which one would not be believed, if one was to say they were so. He that betrays openly, exposes himself at least to Resentment, and always creates himself Contempt; whereas the artful Procedure I speak of, does not
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make a Man lose the Reputation of being a Man of Honour. It is the Poison yet more odious than the Dagger.

Thus it was however, that I behaved with Regard to Madam *de Clerval*; I even employed an Artifice, which, all as it hurt her, only did me Honour.

Among those whom she saw, one of my Friends, *Derville* by Name, had fallen in Love with her. He had an agreeable Figure, was not absolutely without Wit, and yet less without his Share of Giddiness. He was one of those Characters, who throw into Society less Ideas than Soul, less Soul than Warmth, less Warmth than Motion, whose Heart is all Ardour, whose Head is all Action, or rather Agitation. They talk at Random, undertake with Boldness, succeed through favourable Conjectures, and often miscarry, especially when they aim at employing Prudence, because then they never take but false Measures. One meets them every where, one often complains of them, one is always incommoded by them; yet there is no hating them because they have Goodness in their Intentions.

Derville piqued himself upon Discretion, because he had at least the Meaning of it. He wanted to know every Thing, and nothing would have made him precisely reveal any Thing wherewith he had been trusted; but his Endeavours to be discreet were the first Act of his Indiscretion. One learned by them at least that he had a Secret; thence one soon got into the Tract of it, and discovered it at Length, without one's having a Right to make him any Reproaches, and without the Possibility of making him sensible that he deserved any.

As he was the most of any concerned to examine me, he was not long before he suspected what I ill enough dissembled; and the Suspicions of those who have a Right to be jealous easily become Certainties. He was naturally frank, and told me that he had had Designs upon Madam *de Clerval*, but that having perceived my being well with her, he had taken the Resolution to renounce all Pretensions, and that,

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since simply his Suspicions, hindered him from being my Rival, his Procedure very well deserved that I should make him Returns by my Confidence, in confessing to him the Truth. I answered him with a false Air of Disinterestedness, that I was obliged to him for the Regard he showed me, but that he might dispense with it, since it was making me a Sacrifice in vain. ' I believe,' said he, ' that upon this Answer of yours, I might go forward without your having a Right to complain. But, it is enough that I am not tempted to declare myself your Rival out of Resentment, I would try to avoid making Love on a Dupe-footing, which most probably would be the Case, as I see your Interest too well established for me not to lose my Pains. However, since you are pleased to be mysterious, you have no Secret to recommend to me, and of course cannot take it but well that I do not conceal from those who knew my Projects, what it is that makes me relinquish them.'

Upon *Derville's* Answer, I betook me to a most shrewd and perfidious Prevarication; I was indeed, at first disposed to own all; but upon the Sort of a Menace he made of divulging my Secret, if I did not trust him with it, I altered my Design.

There is in Love as in false Devotion, a relaxed Morality, an Hypocrisy and Subterfuges, by Means of which one may play false to Probity, more effectually and securely than if one appeared less to respect it. One does not absolutely impose upon one's self, but one stuns Conscience, and one is not above half-cheated; but the rest of the World is compleatly so. One almost gets rid of Remorse, or one is, at least, sheltered from Reproaches.

I would not for the World have been formally wanting to the Oaths I had made to *Madam de Clerval*; on the other Hand I would have been charmed with my Secret being penetrated, and when I conceived that towards making it publick, Reserve would serve me better than frank Indiscretion, I yet deepened the Air of Mystery I had put on to *Derville*; by this Means I accomplished his Conviction of the Truth,

Truth, and fixed him the more in his Project. I told him faintly, ' that he was in the Wrong to look ' upon me as a Rival, and that he would be more ' so to spread any Thing that might hurt *Madam de Clerval's* Reputation, and that I believed him too ' discreet for that.' ' Too discreet !' said he, ' you ' flatter me egregiously : Discretion is not, and I ' know it, what I most shine in, and, I shall hardly ' think fit to reform at least upon this Occasion.'

Our Conversation ended at this, we separated, and no longer than the next Morning I received Compliments which proved that *Derville* had been as good as his Word. Some Days after I met him, and made him some Reproaches with more Vivacity than Sincerity ; he answered in a Tone of Pleasantry, whilst I grew so serious, and understood Raillery upon it so ill, that I forced him at length, to be as much in earnest as I affected to be. It came then at length to drawing Swords, and I had already wounded him, when we were parted.

What *Derville* had said, might never have come to *Madam de Clerval's* Ears, nor have had much Effect with the Public, but our Rencounter made a prodigious Noise, and informed the whole World of the Occasion of it.

The Affair had not been over an Hour before *Madam de Clerval* was acquainted with it. I was myself going to give her an Account of it, and to make a Merit to her of the Warmth with which I treated every Thing that could affect her ; but her Door was denied me. I was extremely surprized at this Refusal of Access, and I insisted against it, but I was let to know that the Order was clear and precise. I went home and wrote to *Madam de Clerval*, desiring her to unriddle this Mystery to me. She returned me the Letter without having opened it. My Astonishment was encreasing every Instant, when one of her Women came to me, and told me, that *Madam de Clerval*, had no Complaint against me for what had passed, but that my Adventure was not the less Injurious to her, and that to prevent its going
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the Length of dishonouring her, she desired me to dispense with not seeing or writing to her. I was preparing to enter into Particulars, but was stopped by this Woman assuring me, that her Commission was precisely restricted to what she had told me, and she instantly withdrew.

I could not conceive, that a Woman who seemed to love me, could be dissatisfied with my Procedure, that she could take so singular a Resolution, and much less that she could have persisted in it. I presented myself at her Door, I wrote to her again, but neither were my Letters received, and her Door was constantly from that Time denied me. When long after that, I accidentally met with her in the World, I had almost forgot her, and she conducted herself towards me with so reserved a Politeness, that I had that of abstaining from requesting any Explanations from her, and from recalling any Thing that had passed between us.

Her Conduct on this Occasion, though seemingly capricious, was noble, courageous and sensible. In a Woman known to be a Woman of Gallantry, it would have been taken for a Proof the more against her, but it is so rare for a Woman of Honour to have such a Power over herself that the Public ended with justifying her. Women, even the most reasonable, and the most tender of their Reputation, complain, reproach, and, at Length forgive. The strongest Proof of Indifference for a Man, is to give over seeing him.

And indeed, the most experienced in these Matters have ever doubted, whether I had been well with *Madam de Clerval*, and, since that, she might have had ten Lovers, without being once so much as suspected.

Derville, who had only received a slight Hurt, being recovered, and having heard that *Madam de Clerval* had made no Distinction between us, and had equally given Orders for neither of us to see her, became sensible of the Wrong he stood in, came to excuse himself to me, and grew to be so sincerely my

Friend,

Friend; that I might have stood in Need of a hundred Indiscretions, before he would have committed one in my Favour; so simply and ingenuously was he persuaded, that I had Reason to complain of him.

I had besides many Motives of Consolation; I was presently as celebrated as possible, and thought it was already a Gothicism to fight for a Woman, most of that Sex took it kindly of me in their Hearts, and if they taxed me at the same Time with Giddiness, that did me no harm. For any Man who wants to distinguish himself in the Career into which I was entering, it is indifferent enough whether he is well or ill talked of; it is sufficient that he is much talked off. I saw myself then sought after by Women who a little before did not so much as know my Name. Among these there was one of whom the Conquest tempted me.

She was of some Eminence amongst those, who are known by the Name of Schemers, or Women who meddle in all Affairs of Life. They are pretty numerous, without however forming a Society; for though they all know one another, that Knowledge only serves them to be in guard against, and avoid, for Fear of running foul, or athwart one another: There are of them of all Conditions, and all of them have the same Turn of Wit, often the same Views, with opposite Interests; sometimes they have separate Departments, as if by a tacit Convention, they had shared the Business of the World amongst them. Yet, they exclude nothing; they may admit Preferences, but never Bounds. Devotion and Love are equally in Confederacy with this Spirit of Scheming; what would be Passion, or Way of Life in others, serves to these Female Schemers for the Springs of their Machinery: They adopt nothing as Principle, and employ every thing as Means: They are despised, feared, kept Measures with, and sought to. Yet is their Credit at a great Discount from the Opinion it stands in, and from the Appearances one sees of it; their Life has more of Buffle than Substance in it. The Honour of many Events is given

to them, in which they had no Share, though they omit nothing that might make it be believed; this is the Coxcomb-part of their Character. They take especially, great Care to conceal the little Regard, and often the Contempt, in which they are held in by those, upon whose Interest they make the highest Parade of their Dependence. How many Persons are there in Power whose Names are made Use of to serve or hurt, without their knowing any Thing of either? How many of these Female-Schemers whose Credit draws its Existence from the Opinion one has of it! Denying it would destroy it. It is a Phantom that vanishes the Instant that one ceases to believe in it.

They begin this Calling, through Ambition, Avarice, Inquietude; they continue it through Habit, through necessity, to preserve the only Existence they have in the World. A Schemer, who whilst she is in Vogue, is at once the Object of Contempt and Civility, sinks into the most manifestly opprobrious Abjection, when she is forced to remain out of Business, because her Impotency is unmasked.

One is often surprized to find so little Wit as in the most Part of these Female Schemers, and yet they are not those who succeed the least. It is certain too, that the most artful of them, are not enough so to escape the Reputation of it. This Reputation indeed may hurt them in their Projects, but then it serves them like an Advertisement to an Office of Intelligence.

Madam *de St. Fal*, who was one of the Notables in this Way, took a Taste for me, and I met her Half-way. Besides, the Adventure's appearing singular to me, I had heard that these Women make all the Fortunes they undertake, and as I was far from caring to take any Pains about mine, I took it to be more commodious for me to have any but myself take Charge of it. As to this *St. Fal*, she laid her Account, with having at her Disposal a Man of a large Acquaintance, caressed, well-informed of Things, and who indiscreet as to the Rest of the

Universe,

Universe, would have no Confidence but in her. Our Characters were too opposite for our Connexion to be of any long Duration: Every Day she read me a new Lesson of Prudence, and at every Instant I committed a new Indiscretion; she told me her Opinion of this with a great deal of magisterial Dignity; I did not answer her with all the Respect which she had for herself, and began to neglect her very sensibly; she was cruelly piqued at it, but without seeking to retain me, she did not think proper to come to a total Breach with me; she would have ruined me, if she had thought she could do it without an Eclat; perhaps she endeavoured as much underhand, but she continued to speak well of me coolly. This is pretty much the Style of these Women of Business; they wound, but they never say any Ill of one; Abuse they look upon as a Mark of bad Conduct and false Policy. According to Circumstances, they are capable of even serving openly a Person whom they secretly detest, in Expectation of a secure Occasion of Revenge; for Hatred is with them a more tenacious Passion than that of Love is in other Women.

If my Adventure with *St. Fal* was not over-delicious, it did not the less procure me a Sort of Distinction: Most Women made no doubt of my having a superior Merit, from my daring to treat so cavalcerly one accustomed to make herself feared. As soon as this Opinion of me was established, I saw myself so much in Request, that I found it no easy Matter to conciliate so many different Affairs as I had upon my Hands; some I missed that would have greatly pleased me, but which happened to come upon me at Seasons unfavourable to my Engagement in them, insomuch that I have been sometimes on the Point of asking Time, and proposing Terms of Adjournment; and I do not know, but that if I had had the ingenuous Impertinence of making such Proposals, there would have been Women ingenuously mean enough to have accepted them. This is no Exaggeration, and the Experts in these Matters will do me the Justice to allow it.

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I became then in a little Time intoxicated with *Airs* and Petulancy; there was no Species of Folly which I did not consider as making Part of my Duties, and I fulfilled them to their utmost Extent; I hazarded every Thing that a Man of Sense is careful to forbid himself; every Thing succeeded with me, and I was soon an Object of Emulation to all the Coxcomb Tribe which was then more numerous than at present, because there were more Occasions for that Character. What I advance here is not the less true for being contrary to the common Opinion.

If one considers rightly, one will find that all the Follies in Fashion have like the Arts dependent on Taste, their different Age, their Birth, their Reign, and their Declension.

It is so long since that Love was a tender, delicate, respectful Sentiment, that this Love is now looked upon as absolutely romantic; yet there was once an Age of Honour and Probity in Love, from which Discretion was inseparable, and constituted a Part of its Happiness; it was even an essential Duty, and so common, that it was not reckoned to one for Praise, as Indiscretion would have been a Crime attended with too foul Dishonour: That Time is passed.

The first Mark of the falling off of Happiness is, as of Virtue, when one begins to take Glory to one's self upon it. Vanity then began to interfere with Love, and consequently to adulterate it; Vanity begot Indiscretion, and the Women who were the first Victims of it gave themselves up to Despair; then was the golden Age of Coxcomby, for soon this Misfortune became so common, the Frequency of Examples afforded such Matter of Consolation, that the Motives to Shame disappeared, and the most timid and tender of their Reputation took Heart and Courage to stand it: In short, Things are come by Degrees to such a Pass, that one sees Women get the Start of the Men in Indiscretion, and disappoint it by the Eclat they are the first to make, whilst by
their

their Indifference about what the Publick may say of them, they put Coxcombry to a Nonplus.

Who is there will take it for an Honour to divulge what is no longer concealed, or a Secret? I do not doubt then but to see before long Coxcombry perish like great Empires, by the Excess of its Extent.

There is scarce any Folly or Impertinence but what may have its Day for being in Honour, and from thence fall into Contempt. Such has been the Fate of *Petit-Maitres* or Rakes; that Title was at first appropriated only to young Fellows of high Birth, elevated Rank, an amiable Figure, a sparkling Imagination, a smart Courage set off with Graces and Frolic; distinguished by Actions of Note, dangerous in their Conduct; they acted even a Part in the State, had their Influence in Affairs, deserved Praises, needed Indulgence, and understood the Art of carrying all their Points. In this Light it was that the *Epernons*, the *Cayluses*, the *Maugirons*, the *Buffys d' Amboise*, &c. at first made their brilliant Appearance. This Species of singular and eccentrical Beings, almost as rare as that of great Men, did not long subsist; their Successors, or rather those to whom their Denominations were given, had nothing in common with these Originals, but their Birth and their Levity; the Title itself is almost become extinct at Court; one sees there few who have Merit enough to support it; insomuch that it is now relegated into subaltern Classes or Country Places, where abusively or through Derision, it is bestowed on little insignificant Creatures who are not made for Ridelikes of such high Distinction.

Even for Vice itself there is such a Thing as degenerating: Those who were formerly called *Men of Gallantry* could not be so but in Virtue of the Graces of their Figure and their Wit; they durst not attempt the taking up that Character till they were encouraged to believe that they had Merit enough for it, by the Advances that were made them, and those signal enough not to let them doubt of it: Too much sought after to be constant, they were
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carried away by the Multiplicity of Objects who courted their Acceptance; their Inconstancy was sometimes less their natural Character than the Effect of their Situation; they were fickle without being false: This too is changed.

It does not appear at least, that many of those who are now in Fashion, had a very clear Vocation for the Part they act; their Gallantry is a Profession which they have embraced by Choice, as others take on in the Church, the Law, or the Army, often with very contrary Qualifications; but what in this is most admirable, the Want of them is perfectly indifferent as to the Success: To be admitted and succeed in the Career, it suffices, to set out with declaring one's self upon this Footing. You will see Persons shine in it whom you would have advised to have taken Pains to acquire Esteem enough by their Virtues, to intercede for their being forgiven their Deficiency in all that constitutes barely the agreeable.

One would wonder what could tempt them to so laborious a Calling; there is no Profession, no Views of Ambition or Fortune, no religious Macerations that impose so much Care, Perplexity, Trouble, and Inquietudes as the Pretension of being the Man in Fashion, the Hero of the Day in Gallantry: Many have premeditatedly given themselves up to it, who, had they been condemned to it, would have thought themselves the most miserable of Men. However that may be, it is enough to declare one's self a Man of Gallantry to be one, and one continues to be so because one has been so: One may begin this Character without the Merit of a good Figure, and support it without Youth: It becomes an acquired Title; yet one would hardly have imagined that the Right of Prescription could have taken Place in this Point.

There is even upon this Article a whimsical enough Contrast between the Fate of Men and that of Women.

A Man in Fashion preserves his Celebrity, and often establishes his Claims in an Age in which he ought

ought naturally to forfeit them : Long after ceasing, or losing his Right, to please, he may still retain the Power of seducing ; on the contrary, it seems that the Celebrity of a Woman doubles her Age. One is tired with certain Beauties, not so much from their having been long, as for their having been much talked of : There are some among them who would attract a more effectual Attention, if they were at the first of their Appearance without the being younger than they are. The Publick is apt enough to treat Women like publick Diversions, whom it either runs upon or deserts. But if one sees some Men succeed without the Qualities requisite for what they undertake, one sees others born with all the greatest Advantages, except that of a happy Assurance, remain in Obscurity, through Excess of Modesty.

Intrigues too are often engaged in or broke off through Convenience, and not by Choice. The Society in which one lives often decides in them much as Marriages are resolved on between Families ; so that one sees Intrigues as well as Marriages made by Reasons of Convenience : It is not even without Example for Constraint to be employed, and for Lovers to be compelled into a Taste for one another ; so that some Connexions of Gallantry are formed as tyrannically as some Marriages.

I began however, to be less in Love with a Number of my Follies ; my Relish for them was wearing off ; I began to be glutted, and I was in Danger of having the Vapours through mere Weariness of them : I had too great a Share in the Depravation of the Manners of my Age not to perceive myself, that my Vanity suffered by following too long the Ridicules of which I had myself led the Fashion.

I thought it necessary then to look out for Pleasure in some Society, that should be as shining and more honourable than those I had hitherto habitually lived in.

I had occasionally heard a great many Encomiums of that in which Madam *de Saintree* presided : This
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was a young Widow who by her Rank, Fortune, and Taste in Life, assembled at her House the highest Choice of the best Company ; I got myself presented by one of my Relations who was admitted in it, and I have since learned, that it was not without Difficulty he had obtained it for me ; he had however, the Discretion not to let me know so much then, and contented himself with recommending to me the behaving with a more decent Liberty in that House, than what I used elsewhere.

Though I was wrong-headed enough of all Conscience, I was not without a Pliancy of Manners ; so that without Affectation or Constraint, I could conform myself so as not to be out of Concert either with good or with bad Company ; I had soon then chimed in with the Pitch of that which frequented *Madam de Saintree* ; nor did I ever see an Assembly better chosen or more varied, without being what is called mixed Company : There it was I observed a Difference of Characters without Contrariance in them ; Wits of a natural and singular Turn without Affectation or Oddity ; good Sense without Pedantry, and Liberty without Licentiousness. No Topic was excluded the Conversation, no Topic was preferred. The Matter of it without being stiffly regular or nonsensically desultory, turned upon all those Subjects natural to be called up among Persons of different Conditions, well instructed and agreeable, and who were all of them estimable in their respective Class.

When a happy Chance has assembled such a Society, there is no Need of taking Care and Precaution for its Subsistence ; it remains united by a natural Magnetism of which bad Company never comes to spoil the Virtue. One may commonly think that it requires some Attention to keep it off ; not at all ; bad Company does itself Justice, and voluntarily banishes itself from good, because it finds itself as sure to be wearied in it as it is to disconcert it : If this was not the Case, what Defence would one have against the Irruption of those privileged Impertinents
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to whom their Rank opens all Doors, if their own Want of Taste was not happily a Preservative against their Importunity?

Madam *de Saintree* was more than any one made to be the Soul of the Company which her Merit assembled: Independent of the Charms of Figure which always cause an agreeable Illusion; she had an extensive, correct, delicate, natural, and easy Wit; I say nothing of her Character; the Sequel will make it known.

I had more than once experienced that Beauty does not always create Love, and may excite no more than a cool Admiration; but Madam *de Saintree* made me sensible that true Wit joined to a tempting Figure, is ever sure of its Effect. I became so deeply struck with her, that I was simple enough at first, to believe that she only amused me a little more than any other Woman; my Mistake did not continue long, and what strengthened my Taste and piqued me, was, to perceive that the Splendour of my Reputation, far from being a Merit with her, was an Argument against me. She was one of those Women either modest or proud enough to be against having their Names serve to adorn a List, which the more numerous it is, the more they think it is dishonouring, unless they were sure to make the last Article; and the Women who esteem themselves the most, are the least apt to flatter themselves it will be so: It is one of those Occasions in which Self-Love does not inspire Confidence.

Here then, the following my old Plan was out of the Question: Had I betrayed the least Symptom of Hope, Madam *de Saintree* would have looked upon it as an Affront, and have instantly reduced me to a Footing of never forming any.

A Lover who has Prejudices to overcome, ought to destroy them by Degrees, conduct himself with Prudence, and not build upon the first little Mark shown him of a Taste for him: In such a Circumstance one can pretend to nothing unless one arrives at inspiring a true Passion. Of this I was sensible, and without yet daring to flatter myself with Hopes
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of Success, I followed the Course which my best Apprehensions pointed out to me. I laid myself out then to please Madam *de Saintree*, and above all to appear to her worthy of Esteem: It is already a beginning to become estimable, to desire to appear so. I omitted nothing that might persuade her that my Follies had not been my own, but those of my Connections, and that my Attachment to her had been sufficient to me to correct them. I was so much the more persuasive, for that I was myself persuaded, and I put her Heart into my Interest by the Court I made to her Self-Love: This is the surest Lure one can throw out to Persons of Wit open to a certain Sensibility, without which they would never be Dupes.

I soon perceived the Impression I had made on her Heart, and that it grew every Day deeper. Madam *de Saintree* began to be more grave with me than she had been; I judged that her Mind was not tranquil, and that she suffered inward Conflicts; I became upon this more animated, more pressing without being less respectful, and I took Care not to triumph that I might make the surer of my Victory; I obtained it at length, and my Happiness was the completer for her Satisfaction appearing equal to mine.

I was however, in no Degree tempted to make a Trophy of my Conquest; the Pleasure of it was sufficient to me, and when that rises to a certain Pitch of Vivacity, it suspends even Vanity itself; my Glory however, lost nothing by my Discretion; I continued to attract Attention, and the most jealous of those who had kept their Eyes fixed upon me, seeing me as much caressed and distinguished in the best Company as I had been every where else, passed from Jealousy to Admiration. A continual Chain of varied Successes forces one to think that they multiply themselves only in favour of those who deserve them. I perceived the Idea they gave of me, and I was clear that I never had more Reasons to be satisfied with myself than I then had.

If the Admiration of which we are the Object carries us beside the right Sense of ourselves, it sometimes brings

brings us back to it. A secret Complacency leads us to a Self-Examination, that we may enjoy minutely each Particular of those Perfections of which the Collection may, by dazzling our Admirers, hinder them from knowing our Merit in its whole Extent. In seeking to procure myself this interior Satisfaction, I found an Emptiness in myself which occasioned me some Scruples about this immense Merit of mine; I did not distinctly think, but I confusedly felt, that in the Publick there existed a Prejudice in my Favour, of which the Principle was not so advantageous to me as the Effect. I immediately dismissed this disagreeable Idea; I appealed against it to my Reputation, to which I had Recourse as a Confirmation to myself of my Merit. I went into the World again, and retrieved my Self-Sufficiency; I have more than once been made sensible, that if we were to judge after nobody but ourselves, we should do ourselves tolerably exact Justice; and that we esteem ourselves more according to the Rate of others Opinions than our own.

What may contribute to foment this excessive Presumption, is the Sort of submissive Court paid us by some whose Birth is often equal to ours, but which we should not know without their being reduced to let us know it, because their Fathers did not think proper to come to Court, and Fortune may have for several Generations kept them in an Obscurity unsuitable to the Splendour of their Ancestors: A disdainful Indifference hinders us from contesting with them any of their Pretensions; but looking on them as Persons of no Sort of Importance, we content ourselves with keeping them at a Distance by a cool Politeness, that reduces them to humble themselves towards obtaining a Re-admission to us, without having any visible Right to complain of us.

This Sort of Inferiours, these little Cousins out of the Country are not the only ones to help to spoil us; what are commonly called the old Lords about the Court contribute their Share; sometimes indeed, they let escape against us some acrimonious Expressions

sions of a false Misanthropy; but those of ill Humour are short-lived; a long Habit of Respect for the Court inspires them with a machinal Regard for those who appear at it with Eclat, and where they are in Note, if but for their Follies. Our Speeches about them are not indifferent to them; they flatter, they seek to us, and make use of our Indiscretion to serve their Designs; they know that by us it is they must be informed of the Intrigues of the Women, and often of Affairs through those Intrigues: In short, they can have, with Regard to our Irregularities, neither the Compassion that springs from Humanity, nor the Contempt which might proceed from Reason, because themselves have neither the Good of Society at Heart, nor true Sense in their Heads; they are Men palled and muddled as to Pleasures, who, at a certain Age, give themselves wholly up to Ambition or rather to Party-Cabals; they aim at compleating by their Labours, a Fortune they found almost ready made to their Hands, without its having cost them a Dream about it; in short, there are no longer but two Divisions of Characters amongst the Men of the World, the Triflers, and the Party-mongers.

Our Birth and our Rank determine both our Success from the first Start in our Career, and the Facility with which we are to manage our Course through it; insomuch that Persons of our Class generally arrive at nearly the same ending Posts, unless they have by their own Fault, incurred such a Debasement, as to set them beneath all Pretension.

But even the having debased one's self, is not enough to distance one from the Road of Interest and Honour, if one is not withal unfortunate: Otherwise War, Cabals, Hypocrisy, Pedantry, and a thousand other Circumstances furnish Occasions to repair one's self at Court; it is a Place where one may almost always choose one's Reputation: One may lose, renew, change it all within the Revolution of a Year, and successively exhibit a Variety of Characters in one Person: In short, at Court they remark every Thing and remember nothing.

I am very far from thinking that my Sincerity can inspire an Indifference to one's Duties; their is no conceiving how important it is to bestow upon them all one's Care and Attention. I own that at Court they despise nobody, but they sometimes esteem, and whatever may be one's Rank there, that personal Esteem gives to those who deserve it, an Illustration which obscures that of Posts and Employes.

I return to what concerns me: I was then in the Height of my Self-Admiration, when I received a Lesson which humbled without correcting me, and began to make me reflect: If a Man of Sense had taken it into his Head to have represented my Follies to me, I should have construed his Remonstrances either as the Effect of a mean Jealousy, or of a ridiculous Stupidity, and should not have answered them but with a contemptuous Compassion, or a petulant Raillery; but the Check I received came from a Quarter liable to no such Suspicions: The Marchioness herself it was who began to open my Eyes. It was now three Months that we had enjoyed a delicious Life, when I took it into my Head to disturb it: As her Attentions augmented every Day towards me, mine grew cooler and cooler; the Society which assembled at her House, constituted next to myself, the Happiness of her Life; I undertook the Disconcertal of it; it was reserved for a Man of my great Airs to think of so noble a Project, and I should have had the Glory of breaking so worthy a Society, if I had not found in the Marchioness a Character of more Firmness than I could have suspected.

Amongst those who paid her an assiduous Court, the Chevalier *de Nizarre* was the Person to whom she shewed the most friendly familiar Regard.

It is necessary that I should here give an Idea of him: He was a Man of about fifty, who after having served in the Army with Distinction, less out of Ambition than Duty, had quitted the Service upon Peace taking Place; he had a great Rectitude of Heart, and Gentleness of Manners; his Understanding, rather extensive than shining, resembled an even

regular Light that illuminates without dazzling, and diffuses itself over every Object: Men of a middle Order of Understanding might have lived a long Time with him without suspecting his Superiority; it was only for those of eminent Sense to discover it; his Imagination ever subordinate to his Reason, shewed the less shining for it. The conspicuous Parts in certain Characters are only Flashes of Light that shine the more for the Opposition of the Shades in them. There are Heads to which their Disorder does Honour, as Confusion somewhat imitates Abundance: Thus it is too, that the Ruins of an ordinary Building may take up more room than a well-proportioned Palace.

I never knew an Understanding of which all the Parts preserved so perfect an Equilibre: That *je ne sçai quoi* so sensible in certain Physiognomies, and so difficult to describe, the Chevalier must have had it in his Character, to have made so much Merit be forgiven him, for whilst he did Honour to Virtue, he was respected by Envy; he might not appear precisely the first Character every where, but he could, in the Truth of Things, be no where a second one: In short, if I would have painted the most perfect Man of Honour and Worth, I would not have chosen another Model, but I was at that Time far from knowing all the Value of him: Men of Sense are rarely agreeable but to such as themselves, or to those who are near becoming such.

The Chevalier such as I have pictured him, was the Person of whom I gave myself the Air of acting the jealous Part. I was not susceptible of that Jealousy which supposes a delicate Love, and which proceeds from a modest Diffidence of one's self, and is even flattering for the Object beloved; there is another Species of Jealousy, cruel for him that feels it, and injurious enough to the Person who inspires it; but from which I was defended by my Self-Opinion; my Jealousy then was a downright pure Caprice: Tired with being happy in a plain Way, I wanted to

exercise

exercise a tyrannical Empire over the Marchioness to amuse my Vanity, and put her Complaisance to the Tryal: Men are fond of Sacrifices, and I exacted one; I coolly gave the Marchioness to understand that the Assiduities of the Chevalier made me uneasy.

‘ You are not jealous!’ said she, ‘ No assuredly,’ answered I, ‘ I have hitherto preserved myself from such a Ridicule.’ Is it a Caprice then?’ said the Marchioness, ‘ A Caprice! Madam, I am in Love with your calling it a Caprice; I did not think I was a Man of Caprices.’ I own at that Time I did not believe so. ‘ But,’ replied the Marchioness, ‘ what Name will you have me give this Humour you now put on to me? What should be my Reasons for my breaking with an old Friend? Yourself could not will that I should.’ ‘ Oh Madam!’ said I, ‘ I will nothing; I see plainly enough that I should pretend with a very ill Grace to have a Will; I should have imagined, that Lovers were purely to be taken up with searching into, penetrating, and satisfying one another’s Sentiments, without giving or requiring Reasons.’ ‘ I think on the contrary,’ answered the Marchioness, ‘ that Lovers ought to tell one another ingenuously what hurts them, and candidly confess their Motives whether reasonable or frivolous. Self-Love ought not to complain of any Mortification from such Condescensions, or if it receives any, it is to Love it owes the Sacrifice of them. Have you any Reason to be dissatisfied? Speak, explain yourself, are not you sure of my Heart? I have sacrificed too much to you for you to doubt of it? I should indeed deserve Pity, if I had displeased you, all with the most intense Desire of pleasing you; you do not so much as answer me! one would think that you took a Pleasure in afflicting me.’ And indeed, I perceived that her Eyes were suffused with Tears; I was then tempted to relinquish my nonsensical Project, but my mightier Coxcombry commanded me, and I set myself to subdue the Marchioness by affecting to keep up a false Delicacy in Favour of an Ex-

cess of Impertinence. ‘It is in vain,’ said I, ‘Madam, to insist longer upon this Point; we think too differently upon it; my Ideas are perhaps too delicate, too romantic if you please; but whether Reason or Caprice I own I am piqued at your Resistance; perhaps Reflection may bring you to be more complaisant.’

I did not wait for the Answer of the Marchioness, and I came away intimately well persuaded that I should soon receive a submissive Billet from her, that would procure me the Satisfaction of letting myself, with Dignity, be softened.

The next Day came, and I was the more surprized with hearing nothing from the Marchioness, for that I used every Day regularly to receive a Billet from her, for some Arrangement of a Party, to Supper, to publick Diversions, or Walks, and often upon no Occasion at all: Lovers have not always something to say, though they have always a Desire to converse with one another.

Three Days were elapsed without my having had the least Signs of Life shown me from that Quarter; I grew uneasy; I had no doubt but that the Marchioness had taken sick, and that my Severities were capable of making her die of Despair; in short, whether through Generosity or simply a Motion of Curiosity, to clear up the Motives of so obstinate a Silence, I went to her House; I found her with the Chevalier, and perceived that my coming in had cut short an interesting Conversation; I was received politely, and after some general broken Discourse, such as Persons fall into who are improperly interrupted, the Chevalier went out.

The Marchioness and I being left together, we remained a good while without speaking to one another; I waited for her to begin; but finding she did not, and piqued at my being obliged to open a Conversation, of which the Introduction did not a little perplex me, ‘I did not imagine,’ said I with a Tone of some Bitterness, ‘that the Chevalier was so necessary to you, I see that it was really a Sacrifice that I

exact

‘ exacted from you.’ ‘ But Sir,’ said the Marchioness interrupting me, ‘ the Tone you take it upon, would make me fear that it should degenerate into Acrimony, and as I would avoid ever having any between us, hear what I have to say.

‘ I had flattered myself that the captious Insult you offered me three Days ago, was only a transient Caprice, a Fit of ill Humour, of which I should perhaps never have spoke to you again; but as I can no longer doubt, that it is either a premeditated Design, or a Vice constitutional to you, I am willing to prevent the Consequences.

‘ I have loved you; perhaps I love you still; but Love has not all the ascendant over me which it has over other Women, who have commonly nothing in their Head but what reverberates to it from the Heart. I propose then to lay open my whole Soul to you; learn to know me.

‘ I have never confounded Friendship with Love; Friendship is a clear-sighted Sentiment which may begin by Inclination, but must be confirmed by Esteem. This consequently supposes in it a Freedom of Choice, at least to a certain Point. Love is a blind Transport, a Sort of Distemper that Women are liable to catch: The Preference which Love obliges us to give one Man above the Rest is a forced Favour. Esteem is a Justice: Friendship partakes of the one and the other. A Friend has his Rights which Time and Reflection can only serve to confirm. A Lover has no Privileges but what a Caprice has conferred, which another Caprice may make him lose, and which Reason may at any Time take away from him. A Woman would be too happy could she find the Qualities of the one and the Charms of the other re-united in one Person.

‘ But to come to what immediately concerns you and I: You have been my Lover; the Chevalier is my Friend; I have given you all my Tenderness, and I have had Occasion to repent it; I have given him all my Confidence, and I have had all

' the Reason to applaud myself for it ; I have tasted
 ' Pleasures more lively with you than with him, but
 ' he is more necessary than you to my Happiness :
 ' Pleasure is but a Situation, Happiness is an Estab-
 ' lishment ; Judge if I ought to sacrifice him to
 ' you.'

As I fancied I discerned in the Discourse of the
 Marchioness something of the Artifices of a dextrous
 Coquette, who sought to associate to me a Friend,
 only to bring me afterwards to acquiesce in a Plu-
 rality of Lovers, I resolved on that Instant to subdue
 her, to take Advantage of the Passion she had for me,
 and of the Ascendant I believed I had over her, that
 I might be in pass to give Laws to her.

' I admire prodigiously,' said I to her, ' the Philo-
 ' sophical Dissertation and the nice Distinctions you
 ' have just now uttered ; but for me who understand
 ' nothing of subtilizing, or splitting of Hairs upon
 ' Love, I declare to you, that I never will live with
 ' a Woman of whom I am not to engross all the
 ' Confidence, and who shall prefer a Friend to me :
 ' See then if you have a Mind to lose me.'

' The Readiness,' said the Marchioness, ' with
 ' which you take your Determination, might alone
 ' suffice for me to pronounce immediately the one
 ' I now find the most convenient for me ; but before
 ' I ultimately answer you, suffer me to represent to
 ' you the Difference between the Chevalier's Proce-
 ' dure and your's.

' The Chevalier has for me that Tendernefs of
 ' Sentiment which naturally takes Place between
 ' two Friends of different Sexes, and which without
 ' being precisely Love, less yet the Passion of it,
 ' warms the Heart, inspires Attentions, animates the
 ' Duties of Friendship, and renders it the Charm of
 ' Life.

' Not that he has declared to me this Disposition
 ' of his Heart : He feels it without knowing it. In
 ' the Belief that he is past the Age of loving, and
 ' too modest to think he has a Right to inspire
 Love,

‘ Love, he gives Way to a Sentiment which is never more delicious than when one experiences it without a Distinct Perception of it.

‘ Such a Friendship does not commonly go without a Tincture of Jealousy, and the Behaviour of the Chevalier to you, is what forms a Proof to me of his Generosity, of the Candour and Beauty of his Soul. My Taste for you has not escaped him, and nevertheless he has shewn you more Regard than to any one; he has loved you from the Instant he knew you was dear to me; he has respected our Secret; he has observed the same Discretion as if we had owned it to him, and looks upon that as a Confidence on our Part, which he knows from our Imprudence, if there could be such a Thing as Imprudence in relation to him.’ Faith! said I, interrupting here the Marchioness, ‘ the Chevalier is but a Simpleton not to have attempted more with you; in the Dispositions I see you, he could not have failed of succeeding: You agree that he loves you?’ ‘ I am sure of it,’ said she. ‘ That he is dear to you?’ ‘ Very much so,’ added she. ‘ I do not conceive then,’ continued I, what could stop him.’ ‘ Many Considerations,’ replied the Marchioness, ‘ which you are far from supposing, and of which I could not easily make you sensible. However that may be, I have been charmed that the Chevalier either had not Vehemence of Sentiments enough, or did not himself see clearly enough into them, to make me a Declaration of them; because I should not perhaps have given him a favourable Answer, and he would have been unhappy. Such a Declaration from a Man of Fashion in Gallantry is not even a Proof of Love; from a Man of the Chevalier’s Character, it is the strongest Engagement he can take. It would not then perhaps have been in his Power to have cured himself of his Passion, or his Friendship would have been always suspicious to me. No one cares to get rid of a Passion compulsively. The Humiliation of Self-Love irritates it more and more;

‘ whereas a Man who has made himself sensible of an
 ‘ Impossibility of Success, and who has not engaged
 ‘ himself in Advances, reflects, combats his Desires,
 ‘ and finds himself paid for his Struggles by the Ho-
 ‘ nour of obtaining a Victory which he owes only
 ‘ to himself: Those Struggles settle into a Tender-
 ‘ ness of Sentiment, and one is sometimes as happy
 ‘ through the Love one feels as through that one
 ‘ inspires.

‘ My Ideas may still appear to you ridiculous Sub-
 ‘ tilities or splitting of Hairs; but to obviate even
 ‘ those Questions you think would embarrass me the
 ‘ most, I will frankly own to you, that if I had an
 ‘ only Friend whose Love constituted his Unhappi-
 ‘ ness, I should not think myself very criminal if I
 ‘ preserved him to me at the Expence of some Com-
 ‘ plaissance. I would rather give a Friend the Pri-
 ‘ vileges of a Lover than rashly give my Confidence
 ‘ to a Man who had no Merit but that of pleasing
 ‘ me. There are certain Prejudices which I shall
 ‘ henceforth respect in my Conduct, and which I
 ‘ nevertheless reduce internally to their just Value.
 ‘ But I am to tell you farther, that had I a Com-
 ‘ plaissance of this Nature for a Friend I should wish
 ‘ that he were persuaded, that I made him no such migh-
 ‘ ty Sacrifice, because I would not have him judge
 ‘ it himself of Importance enough to triumph upon
 ‘ it as a Lover, or in other Words to abuse it. How-
 ‘ ever, Things are very well as they are, and so
 ‘ far from granting too much to Friendship, I
 ‘ believe that the severest Decency is the Safe-guard
 ‘ of Pleasure, and above all of Constancy in Love.

‘ You advised me to make Reflections, and what
 ‘ is more, you have furnished me with the Subject
 ‘ of them; I have made them, and in Consequence
 ‘ I am now thoroughly determined to have none but
 ‘ Friends; I believe I deserve them, and when a
 ‘ Woman is worthy of Friendship, she ought not to
 ‘ lose herself by Love.

‘ I see by Experience how much the Education
 ‘ we have given us is defective and unserviceable.

‘ They

' They exalt Virtue to us, and yet present it to us
 ' under a forbidding Aspect; they seek to give us
 ' a Distaste of Pleasure, and Pleasure is the sole De-
 ' sire with which Nature inspires us. Curiosity en-
 ' gages us to clear up our Doubts were it only to
 ' get rid of the Constraint into which we are thrown
 ' by the Contrariety between Nature and Educati-
 ' on. It would stand us in more stead, if without
 ' exaggerating of Virtue, or imposing upon us about
 ' Pleasure, they fairly gave us to know the Conse-
 ' quences of the one and the other. There is no
 ' Passion which is so natural to us as that of Self-
 ' Love; all the others are bound to make Terms
 ' with it, and I greatly doubt, whether a young
 ' Person, had she nothing more but Pride to her
 ' Virtue, would be tempted with the Condition of
 ' the Woman of Gallantry the most happy in it.
 ' How many Disgusts and Humiliations is she obliged
 ' to prevent by Dint of Complaisances, or devour
 ' with secret Resentment? It is doubtless rather of
 ' the latest that I have made these Reflections, but
 ' it is ever Time enough to benefit by them: So, Sir,
 ' if you please to make one amongst my Friends, I
 ' shall be greatly flattered with your Acceptance of
 ' that Title, for you must not lay your Account
 ' with having henceforward any other Pretension to
 ' me.'

This Discourse of the Marchioness appeared so
 singular to me, and so little in the common Order
 of Women, that I could not persuade myself that it
 was as serious in the Motives as in the Expressions
 of it; fearing nevertheless to exasperate her further,
 I did not think fit to keep up the assuming Air I had
 at first taken up. ' Madam,' said I, ' you certainly
 ' have a Mind to put me to the Trial; for it would
 ' be an unheard-of Thing, that an Instant of ill Hu-
 ' mour between two Lovers should terminate in a
 ' Rupture.' Sir,' answered she, ' I have been sin-
 ' cere in my Weakness, I am so in my Repentance
 ' of it, and will be firm in my Resolution; let us
 ' say no more of it I beg of you.'

I was

I was in the greater Consternation at these last Words of the Marchioness for my remarking in her Tone neither Harshness nor Anger; I loved, I was piqued, I was mortified, and was sensible I had no other Resource but that of Humiliation to her, and of seeking to sooth her into a relenting by Dint of Meannesses: Pride engages one to employ them, because it lays its Account to expunge them by the Success. I threw myself at her Feet, I said all that I could imagine the most moving, I used the most pressing, the most submissive Entreaties; my being piqued to the Soul even extorted Tears from me which I would have withheld from her seeing, and which I wished she should perceive: These are rapid Emotions of Self-Love, that succeed and destroy one another in their Turns; that appear contradictory, and yet proceed from the self-same Principle.

The Marchioness seemed to be moved, but she remained unalterably fixed. 'I conjure you,' said she, 'to give over a vain Attempt; I am willing to believe that you have still a Taste for me, but I read your Heart better than you do yourself, and at this Instant your Pride is more wounded than your Love, if you persist to press me, it will be without Success; my Resolution is taken; you would hereafter think you had demeaned yourself, you would blush for it, and take an Aversion to me. I do not wish to lose you; let us join in forgetting what is passed, let us continue Friends, it is the best Thing we can do.'

'Madam,' said I, rising up in a Rage, for I was still upon my Knees, 'you drive me to Despair, you hate me; if there remained to you the least Sentiment of Love, you would not have that Liberty of Spirit which you shew upon this Occasion. Love feels and follows its Emotions; Hatred possesses the Calm of Reason: It is for Hatred alone to carry Cruelty such Lengths. Think however, that it may be fatal to yourself; either you are little afraid of an Eclat, or you reckon

' a great

‘ a great deal upon me, in which doubtless you do
 ‘ me Justice; but one is not always the Master of
 ‘ one’s Transports, and Passion may set Probity a-
 ‘ side.’

At these Words, the Marchioness eying me with
 a cool Indignation, said, ‘ I understand you, Sir,
 ‘ and I will not leave your Falsity the least Refuge.
 ‘ If I cannot inspire you with Sentiments of Probity,
 ‘ I will reduce you at least to all the Frankness of
 ‘ explicit Villainy. Yourself cannot but feel all the
 ‘ Odiousness of an open Menace, which one would
 ‘ nevertheless think the least to be suspected Lan-
 ‘ guage of Passion; and in preparing me for the
 ‘ basest Procedure, you seek to anticipate for your-
 ‘ self an Excuse in the Imprudences which Passion en-
 ‘ gages to commit. Undeceive yourself, or cease to
 ‘ believe that you can deceive any Soul alive, upon
 ‘ the Nature of your Motive.

‘ Love, when happy, may discover itself, and be-
 ‘ tray the Object of it by Indiscretion or Imprudence,
 ‘ by an Excess of Sensibility, or even by its actual
 ‘ Happiness; but Revenge, often blind in its Mo-
 ‘ tives, is never so in its Designs. One may think
 ‘ one’s self authorized to seek revenge, but one cannot
 ‘ be ignorant that one does seek it. Besides, if you
 ‘ make publick what has passed between us, you
 ‘ will inform the World of nothing that it does
 ‘ not already suppose, but you will yet more clearly
 ‘ prove that you are a Man no Honour. Can you
 ‘ believe that I flatter myself that our Intimacy has
 ‘ never been suspected? With how much soever Pru-
 ‘ dence an Intrigue may be conducted, one may in-
 ‘ deed hinder its being known, but there is no hin-
 ‘ dering its being believed. But, be that as it may :
 ‘ I have nothing to ask of you. My Entreaties
 ‘ would be superfluous, if you have Honour; and
 ‘ vain, if you have none.’

The Marchioness, without waiting for my Answer,
 or rather to prevent it, withdrew into a Closet, of
 which she shut the Door, and left me stunned, and
 divided between Madness, Shame, and Admiration.

I left

I left the room immediately, for fear of letting my Confusion be seen by those who might come in, and went home, to shut myself up in Privacy, and there try to clear up my Ideas, and to come to some Resolution. I was two Days before I could determine myself; at length, whether from Compunction, or Hope, I wrote the Marchioness a most submissive Letter, and soon after went myself to her. She received me perfectly well, but managed with so much Precaution, that without appearing to affect it, I never could find her alone, till she saw me convinced of the Impossibility of re-assuming with her my former Privileges.

End of the first Part.



MEMOIRS

UPON THE

MANNERS *of this* AGE.

PART. II.

I TOOK so much the more Care to be assiduous in seeing Madam *de Saintree*, a I did not choose to have my Disgrace take Air; and in order to salve my Honour, I resolved to impose on the Publick by an apparent Inconstancy. Perhaps I should have made a better Choice than I did, had it not been for the Hurry I was in to make a Show of it, and I preferred the being taxed with having made a bad Choice, to the being suspected of having met with such a Disgrace.

The Countess of *Vergey* was at that Time the Object of general Attention, from her Figure, her Graces, and the Advantages of her Birth and Rank. She was one of the small Number of those who are quoted, when to prove that a publick Walk has been a fine one, a publick Diversion adorned, or an Entertainment splendid, one says, "Madam such an one was there."

As to her Reputation, I ought also to own that the Countess was one of those Women, whose Disorder of Life is exaggerated, though Satire might confine

confine itself to the Bounds of Truth, without scarce losing any thing by the Restriction. She was one too of those Women with whom a Lover is often plagued and embarrassed, and sometimes obliged to say to his Friends: That she is an unhappy Woman in her Temper, very amiable, very friendly, very estimable at bottom, in many Points: That the Publick is unjust, and handles certain Characters too roughly, and without Provocation; that Women shew her no Mercy, and tear her to pieces out of pure Envy, and that their foolish Lovers repeat their Scandal to please them.

There is some Truth and some Falsity in these Apologies, but unhappily they convert nobody. I did not at first see Madam *de Vergey* in her true Point of View, but I thought her handsome, and the Conquest of her was flattering, from the Number of gay, glittering Sparks who urged their Designs upon her, and from her having rejected some very amiable Men; probably, because she could not be every where at once. In short, the Taste I had taken for the Countess hindered me from listening to what was said of her, or did not permit me to give much Attention to it; and yet there is less Astonishment due to my Blindness than to the Manner in which it ceased. Without insisting here on the Preludes of our Connection, I shall only say, that she was flattered with my Homage, and distinguished me by so signal a Preference, that the most presumptuous of my Rivals were obliged to renounce their Pretensions, or at least to suspend them.

My triumph was so publick, that any Indiscretion on my Side would have been a Folly, and Discretion a Ridicule. An exteriour Indifference of Air to the Glory of it, was the only Countenance that became me to put upon it, and I kept it up with a great deal of Dignity. Happy Situation! that of a Man of Fashion in Gallantry not to be obliged to have any work with Measures of Secrecy or Decorum.

If

If I found Madam *de Vergey* on the public Walks; I never offered to join her, but when it would have appeared an Affectation to decline it. At the Theatres I was never seen in the same Box with her, a Particular which could be a Mark of Distinction for no one but myself. I took any Place at random, and had the Pleasure of seeing the Eyes of the Company alternately directed to her and me. What a Swell of Self-opinion does not this Curiosity of the Public suggest to him who is the Object of it! What Pleasure did I not taste in considering that so many Heads were employed about me, and that I was the Theme of all Conversations? The Intoxication of Love is not comparable to that of these Airs, for turning the Head: but could I have seen myself in cool Blood, I should have found myself a great Fool, a great Coxcomb, and a great Fop.

I had then no Uneasiness but about one Article, which it is not very common to have any Concern about, and that was the Husband; besides that, he had a particular Friendship for me, he enjoyed a Character of great Consideration in the World, and there is no injuring, without Scruples, the Man one esteems.

The Count *de Vergey* was a Man of uncommon Probity, right solid Sense, and a great deal of Wit. His Character was frank, and somewhat dry, his Satire rather upon the corrosive; there were few Persons he esteemed, and fewer yet whom he loved. He had a Sort of Compassion for Fools, was never under any Constraint with Knaves, and amused himself at the Expence of the Ridiculous, or kept Silence about them from an Excess of Contempt. He had at first been in Love with his Wife, and was become very indifferent about her, without its seeming that her Conduct had any Share in it, for in other Respects, his Procedure to her was thoroughly polite, and well-bred.

I could not conceive how a Man of so fine an Understanding, and who had so little Faith in the Virtue of Women, could be so grossly the Dupe of his

his Wife's. I could not attribute such a Blindness but to that particular Grace and Favour, whereby the Husbands are scarce ever informed of what relates to them; this is perhaps the only Civility for which they can have to thank the Publick.

However my Esteem for him, and his Friendship for me, kept me in constant Fear that he might come at last to open his Eyes. This I dreaded, because he might have looked upon as a Treachery from me what would have been no more than an ordinary Affront, on the Part of any Man not so intimately connected with him as I was.

So that though I sometimes treated his Wife cavalierly enough, I was sure, in his Presence, to behave to her with the most respectful Reserve. As for her Part, who neither regarded herself before him, or before the Public, she gave one Day, one of those Scenes of Eclat, so bad as to scandalize even the Court. And indeed at the Court itself, rare as it may be to find there Women, who by a Purity of Manners, an irreproachable Conduct, and a sincere Piety, are an Ornament to their Sex, it is rarer yet to find those consummate Intrepids, who bravely over-leap those Barriers, over which Women barely gallant dare not set their Foot. There are never there, at one Time, above three or four, who are, one may say, the Plenipotentiaries of Vice, in Charge to protest against Virtue and Decency, and the Countess was one of that Number.

I was so enraged, and so confused at the Scandal she had given, that I was going to reproach her sufficiently with it. I could not find her, but was so unlucky as just in the Agitation I was in, to stumble upon *de Vergey*, who remarking my Vexation, asked me what was the Reason of it. I do not think I was ever in the like Perplexity; it will easily be judged how important I held the concealing the Cause from him. I told him I had a violent Head-ach; the very baldest Answer is ever that which presents itself uppermost to a Man who has not a good one at Hand; and that is, because he is searching
for

for it. 'The Head-ach,' said he, 'is not a Disorder you are commonly subject to, and I durst lay a Wager that something is the Matter upon which you are afraid to talk to me; you are in the wrong, with a Friend one may touch upon certain Things, which one would not chuse to impart to indifferent Persons.' By this, I currently understood that he had been informed of this his Wife's recent Adventure, and that he believed me penetrated with it out of Friendship to him. I was then extremely relieved by my conceiving that he had touched the wrong Scent, and that I might humour his Mistake, I entered into it. 'Why in Truth,' said I, 'it is some Consolation to see one's Friend take Part sincerely in You may safely depend,' said *de Vergey*, 'on no one's having a greater Concern than me for whatever relates to *you*; but, faith, my Friend, a Man should know how to take a manly Resolution, and hold Things at no higher Rate of Esteem, than their just Value.'

I thought at first I had hit his Meaning, but I did not now know what to make of it. 'What do you mean,' said I, 'by what relates to *me*?' 'Sdeath!' said he, 'are not you my Wife's Lover, and in that Case, who the Devil would you have should be hurt by her Conduct; not me I hope?' 'Faith,' said I, my dear *Vergey*, 'I was simple enough to believe it; but you relieve me beyond Expression.' 'That surprizes me,' said he, 'you a Man of the World, and yet so little acquainted with it? It is now a long Time that Madam *de Vergey* and I have nothing in common between us, but the Name. You are after many others in Possession of my Rights, you should not then grudge to have the Burthen of her Ridicules fall upon you. I am persuaded you think of this as I do, but you believe you owe me a Mark of Politeness, which is however only your mistaken-enough Notion of Things; I esteem you too much to see it in another Light, and I should have a very bad Opinion of your Probity, if being my Friend, and thinking to injure
' me,

‘ me, you had seduced my Wife. I declare to you
 ‘ then, that all her Proceedings, even the most li-
 ‘ centious of them, are indifferent to me, ridiculous
 ‘ as to you, and dishonourable to herself, supposing
 ‘ that she could yet be dishonoured.’

‘ I own,’ replied I, ‘ that you are in the right
 ‘ Principles, but you are the only Husband, be it
 ‘ said without Intention to flatter you, who are im-
 ‘ pressed with so strong a Sense of them; and, who
 ‘ dares own them with such Courage.’ ‘ I assure
 ‘ you,’ said *de Vergey*, ‘ that without pretending to
 ‘ much Honour from these Sentiments, I had at first
 ‘ no other Design than to give you some Consolati-
 ‘ on in your Disaster; if I had found you more than
 ‘ reasonably grieved; but since we are upon this
 ‘ Matter, I will make an End of telling you my O-
 ‘ pinion of it. You think that other Husbands are
 ‘ not so fully convinced of these Principles as myself,
 ‘ because they do not declare them; and why? they
 ‘ do not so much as believe that any Body doubts
 ‘ of it. You indeed, might have remained in the
 ‘ same Error with Regard to me, if this Accident
 ‘ had not happened to inform you of my Way of
 ‘ Thinking: But this ought to make you judge the
 ‘ same of that of others, especially when you see
 ‘ them act in Consequence thereto. The Activity
 ‘ of your Life has not yet allowed you to make Re-
 ‘ marks on any Thing; but, with a little Reflection,
 ‘ you will find that Things are precisely as they
 ‘ ought to be.’

‘ The Laws are made to regulate our Actions, but
 ‘ our Prejudices determine our Sentiments, and those
 ‘ Prejudices take their Birth from Custom. Now
 ‘ the Customs of the Court are totally different from
 ‘ those of the City. For Example, if there, a pri-
 ‘ vate Person is wrong’d by his Wife, behold him
 ‘ dishonoured, that is to say, a Subject of Ridicule;
 ‘ for in *France* those Terms say much the same
 ‘ Thing. But why is he dishonour’d? It is because
 ‘ having married to his own Taste, he is at least ac-
 ‘ cusable of having made a bad Choice. It is not

‘ so

‘ so with regard to Persons of a certain Rank, whose
 ‘ Marriages are a Kind of Treaties that turn upon
 ‘ the Conveniencies of Birth and Fortune. For which
 ‘ Reason it is we know nothing amongst us of that
 ‘ burlesque Appellation bestowed, in common Life,
 ‘ upon a Husband to whom a Wife plays false.

‘ And indeed to whom can such a Title with Pro-
 ‘ priety be applied, but to a Man in Love with his
 ‘ Wife, and who in the Trust that she loves him,
 ‘ has *that* Trust betrayed by her? We are not in
 ‘ that case, *We!* or if such an one by chance should
 ‘ be found amongst us, he would be a rare Excep-
 ‘ tion. You may even observe that it is the first
 ‘ false Step a Woman takes of this Sort, which re-
 ‘ flects a Ridicule upon her Husband; for let but her,
 ‘ Gallants multiply never so little, or her Adventure
 ‘ make a great Noise, he is soon undeceived, takes
 ‘ his Measures upon it, and is restored to the Privi-
 ‘ leges of our Rank.

‘ It is in Consequence of these different Ways of
 ‘ thinking, that a Citizen, who after his Separation
 ‘ from his Wife, with all the Scandal tack’d to such
 ‘ a Step, should take her again, would be more dis-
 ‘ honoured than before, because he thereby publicly
 ‘ proclaims himself her abject Slave. There are, at
 ‘ this Day, more Separations than formerly there
 ‘ used to be Divorces. But if the Divorce was al-
 ‘ lowed, few Persons of the Court would take the
 ‘ Benefit of it to get rid of their Wives, because the
 ‘ Manner in which they live with them, is of itself
 ‘ a Kind of standing Divorce. The Husbands and
 ‘ their Wives, in this Class, live together without
 ‘ Bitterness, and are always at Liberty to take one
 ‘ another again. The Husband is not obliged to
 ‘ blush at such a Resumption: it is a Trick he then
 ‘ plays to his Wife’s Gallants, for he is almost sure
 ‘ not to find any Resistance. Women are naturally
 ‘ timid; the most determinate of them submit to the
 ‘ Husband’s Ascendant, fear and respect him, when
 ‘ he has a mind they should, unless he is in love
 ‘ with them. If I pleas’d, I could carry mine off
 ‘ from

' from you, but I despise her too much ever to en-
 ' tertain the Design of it: She would be a Burthen
 ' to me, for I find her Company tiresome. She is
 ' believed to have Wit, but she has very little; I
 ' know her better than you do. When you will ex-
 ' amine her in cold Blood, you will find that all her
 ' Merit springs from her Ill-nature, and from the sin-
 ' gular Turn she knows how to bestow on Scandal;
 ' and it is that which procures her so many Enemies,
 ' Admirers, and Slaves. If ever Decency was to
 ' come into Honour again, she would be looked up-
 ' on as an Idiot, and I know a great many more in
 ' the same Case.' ' Oh! said I, ' you cannot deny
 ' that she has a peculiar Grace.' ' Oh! no doubt,'
 ' said *de Vergey*, I expected so much; it is the hackneyed
 ' common-place Encomium, which is given to all
 ' the Women who have the Art of preparing their
 ' Malice with some fullsome, insipid Preliminaries,
 ' which they employ to seduce the Men. You are
 ' all of you strange Dupes.

' For the rest, I beg your Pardon if I speak too
 ' freely of your Mistress; my Design is not to give
 ' you a Dislike of her. I had rather she had you
 ' than another, because I like your Company, and
 ' you may perhaps reclaim her out of the opprobri-
 ' ous Way she is in. There are Women who repair
 ' themselves, in some measure, by a good Choice.
 ' If that was to happen, you would render my House
 ' more agreeable, in clearing it of a Croud of fea-
 ' ther-brain'd Flutterers, lively without Ideas, eager
 ' without a View, flighty without Imagination, tire-
 ' some with all their noisy Hurry, speaking ill of all
 ' the World, often without propense Ill-nature, and
 ' of themselves, upon the same Strain, out of Folly,
 ' and always improperly, from Nothingness of Cha-
 ' racter: Having in short all the Inconveniencies of
 ' Wit, without the Graces of it, and of Dullness
 ' without the Tranquillity of it. I dare not flatter
 ' myself with the Hopes of seeing such a Reforma-
 ' tion take place in my House; but come what will
 ' of it, I shall be nevertheless your Friend.'

I was

I was so movingly affected with *de Vergey's* Confidence, I enter'd so much into his Sentiments, that from that Moment I took the tenderest Friendship for him, and his Wife became as indifferent to me as if she had been my own. I should indeed nevertheless have broke with her, nor should I have believed her in the least sensible to it, but for some Railleries she made upon it. *Vergey*, who remarked our Rupture, jested with me about it, and told me, that if I took it into my Head to be delicate, I should lose a great many Pleasures, unless Reason came into Fashion.

' I do not think,' said I to him, ' that Fashion will ever carry its Dominion that length, nor do I greatly reckon upon it, replied he, but happen it may, for amongst us, Fashion extends its Jurisdiction over every thing.

' As I am not of an Humour to entertain you with supercilious Morality, and see every thing with Indifference enough, I shall not tell you, that there never was so corrupt an Age as the present one. At bottom, as to the Stock of Vices, one Age has not many Reproaches to make to another: perhaps in justice one should discount from the Corruption of the current one, what may more properly be transferred to the Account of Folly, but I believe there never was a more indecent one. For Example, when thinking to deceive me, you concealed yourself from me, you did me a great deal too much Honour, and I was far from giving you any Credit for a Discretion, of which I could not have suspected you, and I durst lay a Wager, *Madam de Vergey* never advised you to it. A Woman does not commonly keep so much Measures with her Husband, but she may keep them with a Gallant, whom she does not care to lose, and to whom however she wants to play false. Then indeed she will use some Care and Management, in which she thinks she condescends a great deal. And why? because an Act of Infidelity to a Lover may have

' a Temp-

‘ a Temptation of Convenience with it, which one
 ‘ done to a Husband no longer admits. If the de-
 ‘ ceived Lover comes to discover it, and pretends to
 ‘ give himself any Airs of Uneasiness, he is imme-
 ‘ diately cashiered. On the contrary, if he is mean,
 ‘ or if you will, wise enough to shut his Eyes, he is
 ‘ thenceforward the more considered and carested.
 ‘ He may indeed sometime have to undergo Fits of
 ‘ Ill-humour, but he is at liberty to have them too,
 ‘ provided they are not jealous ones; ’till at length
 ‘ he becomes a Husband in Form, and the true one
 ‘ is no more than a Stranger, very well contented
 ‘ with being so.

‘ The Age then, as I was saying to you, will not
 ‘ become better at Bottom; it will not reform, but
 ‘ it will change at least, were it but from becom-
 ‘ ing weary, cloyed, and disgusted with Indecency.
 ‘ It is in vain that Virtue protested against the Dis-
 ‘ orders in Love, it was but too natural for the At-
 ‘ traction of Pleasure to carry all before it. It is
 ‘ then to an Excess of Depravation, to a Surfeit of
 ‘ Licentiousness, to a thorough Debasement of Man-
 ‘ ners, to Vice itself, in short, that it belongs to de-
 ‘ stroy its own false Pleasures, and to discredit that
 ‘ Sort of Love, which itself inspires. The World
 ‘ will be forced to have Recourse again to Virtue,
 ‘ even for the Interest of its Pleasure. Believe me
 ‘ some Change will happen, and perhaps for the
 ‘ better.

‘ For instance there is nothing in these Days so run
 ‘ down, so exploded as conjugal Love. This Pre-
 ‘ judice is too violent; it cannot last. Now let us
 ‘ see how a Revolution may come about.

‘ A Man of a distinguished Rank, quoted for his
 ‘ agreeable Person, his Wit, his Grace, with a sprink-
 ‘ ling of Coxcombry; I require, as you see, a Con-
 ‘ currence of a Number of Qualities, because less
 ‘ cannot go to the composing a Head of a Sect;
 ‘ such a Rarity of a Man, I say, may find himself
 ‘ in love with his own Wife. I conceive that he
 ‘ will

' will at first combat this Inclination, or that if he
 ' cannot conquer it, he will endeavour at least to
 ' conceal the Knowledge of it from the Public; but
 ' there are Persons devilishly keen in discovering the
 ' weak Side of others. In spite of all his Skill then,
 ' his Secret will be penetrated, and before he is per-
 ' fectly unmasked, he will betake himself, in his own
 ' Defence, to act with Intrepidity and brave it out.
 ' This is sometimes an artificial Way of acquiring
 ' the Courage one has not, and is already a Begin-
 ' ning of it. In short a new Kind of Singularity
 ' will pique his Self-love, and he will appear un-
 ' dauntedly in the Character of a Husband in love
 ' with his own Wife. Whilst the Women will
 ' chaunt forth his Praises, for fear he should recant,
 ' and before the Men are convinced that he is in
 ' earnest with his Part, his Condition will be establish-
 ' ed, and fixed. What then? Why there will not be
 ' wanting some young Men who will consider this
 ' Conduct as a fire-new Ridicule, which they will
 ' determine to come into for their Share of being
 ' talked of for it, if but to rob the Inventor of his
 ' Honour of being *unique* in it. Vice and Virtue
 ' are equally Matter of Imitation. They will act
 ' Love for their Wives without feeling it, 'till they
 ' are taken in by the Rule of Mocking being Catch-
 ' ing. A bad Principle will have a good Effect,
 ' and they will become attached in good earnest by
 ' dint of having affected it. Others who are sin-
 ' cerely in love with their Wives, will be charmed
 ' with having Authorities for not constraining their
 ' Inclination. Nothing but happy Couples may
 ' come to be heard of; a good Air of the Thing
 ' may come into play, and such a Circumstance may
 ' possibly come into Existence, as will bring Virtue
 ' itself into Fashion.'

This Prediction which *de Vergey* drew of the Age
 appeared to me exceedingly precarious; yet have I
 already seen it in part verified by some Examples,
 and who knows but they may spread?

My Adventure with Madam *de Saintree* had already humbled my Coxcombry, but the Reflexions that *de Vergey* induced me to make radically, cured me. I began to suspect that my high Reputation was not so generally established as I supposed it; that the Foundations of it were very frail; that Successes in Gallantry did not authenticate a Merit to which the Public was obliged to subscribe: that Sentiment had rarely any thing to say in the Commerce of Women, and that it was a great deal if one found, what is commonly called Pleasure in it. I resolved then to look for nothing further; and so far was I from drawing any Vanity from the Conquests I might make, that I even set myself to conceal them, and to beg Secrecy of those Women who might omit, or forget to exact it from me. Thus at length I came to be sensible that the Admiration I had flattered myself I was in, had no Existence but in such Wrong-heads as my own, and that I had nothing better to do than to take Pains to lose this sort of Reputation, that I might be in pass to acquire an entirely different one.

As my Adventures passed under my Review, I could not help recalling the mortifying Part I had often seen played by Men estimable in many other Respects, who after also having been in Fashion, and as much spoil'd as myself still was, had fallen into Contempt, for want of having made a timely Retreat out of a Course of Life, pardonable through nothing but the Privilege of Youth. Of these I saw every day some sacrificed to such giddy young Fellows as myself, or exposed to the Caprices, to the open Infidelities of Women, whom they loved, because they must love Somebody; and to whom they were obliged to pass them over, or were but too happy if they could feign Ignorance of them. I remarked that the Habit of Pleasures may subsist, and become a Necessity, though the Taste for them may be worn out. In Consequence of these Reflections, I resolved not to expose myself to share one Day a Fate I took to be so degrading, nor to become one
of

of those old and stale *Agreeables*, of whom the Disgraces in Love are despicable, and their Successes ridiculous.

I was precisely then in the Position of being able to forsake, with Honour, this Life of Dissipation. Those who have never given any Scandal to the Public are in less Consideration with it than those who can of themselves timely renounce a Habit of subscribing to it. Nothing yet imposed on me the Necessity of such a Retreat, and it was that Conscience which doubtless determined me. I confess ingenuously too, that I had no great Violence to use with myself on this Occasion.

Though my Life appeared a Chain of Pleasures, I tasted few, because they were, as one may say, grown to be the Business of it, and of Course a Drudgery. No Adventure now brought with it wherewith to pique my Taste, unless attended with some Singularity, and those of this Sort are very rare. Love may suffice to employ fully the Heart, and needs no Variety: A Continuity of Sentiment augments the Charm of it; but merely Pleasure perishes of Uniformity, and I was carried away by nothing more than what is so vulgarly called Pleasures.

It is not that I had not suffered Refusals; I could enumerate as many of them as of my Successes. I have even experienced some of those Mortifications at Court; but for the most part I met with them in middle Life, amongst that order of Women, who had not received that polite Education which makes them look upon Virtue as a Prejudice, and Duty as a Weakness.

Contempt of Duties, and the Ignorance of them, produce the same Effect: The first proceeds from a false Education, the other from a total Want of it. Thence it is that one finds amongst Persons of the highest Rank, the same Manners as in the lowest Life; but there is a middle Class in Society, in which they enjoy no Right to Misconduct or Scandal, and in which they must blush to dishonour themselves. Their Education leaves Traces in their Minds which the

Passions cannot but with Difficulty obliterate. When a Woman of this Condition gives Way, she yields to a Passion long conflicted with; she surrenders with Regret, and still preserves some Remorse: For her it is that one may pronounce, there are unhappy Moments, little of Pleasures, and less yet of Tranquillity. Amongst these, I had sometimes occasion to learn that a Woman who had refused me with the most Indifference, had nevertheless admitted another Lover. If I had the Curiosity to know who he was, I was surprized to find him, one whose all of merit was an amiable Figure, Youth, and Discretion; but who for the rest was one of those, for whom that Phrase of *Nobody knows* seems to have been made. I own I then felt as much of Compassion, or Contempt, as of Resentment. I nevertheless observed an inviolable Secrecy, with Respect to the Refusal I had sustained. Nothing could have made me betray it; which is a Proof that Indiscretion does not totally proceed from a Levity of Character. I did not, in the like Case, always practise the same Discretion, with respect to a Woman in high Life; because then I imagined I pinned a Ridicule upon her, by divulging it.

Most of the women with whom I had been well, I had owed to Fancies often confessed for such on both Sides, without Delicacy, and even without Disimulation.

Some had wanted to make me believe, that they had a love for me; and these had never but one and the same Sort of Proof to give me of it, 'till that Proof was worn out enough, for us quietly to quit one another.

Others, more nice, had endeavoured to persuade me that their Complaisance for what I pressed them to, proceeded purely from the Force of their Friendship for me. Unluckily the Term of Friendship may be equally employed in the Service of true or false Modesty.

After my breaking off with them, I had however no room for suspecting that any of the above Divisions could have loved me, but from their as outrageous

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ous railing against me, as if they had been capable of a Love-Resentment. I thought this Procedure sovereignly unjust, and often took the liberty to represent to them, that we had not acquired the Right of hating one another; and I have sometimes had the Precaution to stipulate to the contrary, before I would engage.

I do not however herein include the small Number of those whose Conduct would never have been out of rule, if they had not unhappily had a tender Heart, and too lively Sensations. Their Frankness in loving, the Remorse it occasions in them, the Reproaches they make to themselves, the Shame they sometimes show for it, all depose that they had Virtue, and that they have betrayed it; thus what contributes then to decry them, ought rather to procure them compassion: But the Remorse of a Woman, bashful in her Errors, encourages mean Spirits to insult her. There are Women who stick in a Plunge of Humiliation, purely for the Want of some Vices more, to flounce out of it; these are the most exposed to the cruel Railleries of those Women, who constitutionally and bravely tranquil in the Midst of their Disorders, have not even the Excuse of Pleasure for them, though they hunt assiduously for it, and even inspire without feeling it themselves: One would think they run over every Degree of Licentiousness with nothing but Distaste, and through a cool Curiosity which they never can arrive at satisfying.

My Design is not here to review all the Women with whom I have had Intimacies, Numbers of whom seemed to have forgot them themselves, and some of them I myself should have been puzzled to remember: I have only meant to speak of those with whom my Connexions have contained any notable Singularity, and I ought not to omit one for whom I had contracted a great Liking, but whose Commerce was too tempestuous to be supportable.

A taking Figure, an Impetuosity of Character, a Rectitude of Heart, and an over-heated Imagination, in these you have *Madam de Remicourt*.

It was not easy to judge whether her Sentiments came from her Ideas, or whether her Thoughts were the Works of her Sentiments. The Connexion that took place between us, was not such an one as arises insensibly from Inclination, is prepared by Degrees, and forms itself with Time. In one and the same Instant we found ourselves struck with the violentest Taste for one another: She thought she found in me a singular Conformity of Character with her own, and whether so or not, or that these Sort of Imaginations are contagious, I was as soon persuaded of it as herself.

As our Intoxication was equal, I told her that we ought to leave to cold Imaginations, to vulgar Lovers, the injurious Prudence of a previous reciprocal Probation; that a prompt Reliance ought to warrant the Sincerity of our Hearts; that the sole Method of preventing the Indiscretions, which the Violence of a Passion under Constraint makes one commit, was to plunge immediately into it with mutual Frankness; that it was even the only Sort of Prudence that became our Character.

If *Madam de Remicourt* had had no other than a plain, ordinary, common Sense, she would not have found this reasoning over plausible, but those lively Imaginations are apt to take all extraordinary Motives for the strongest Reasons: It is not so easy to persuade them by consequential Argument, because their Understanding is incapable of Method.

Her Passion, or rather her Taste for me became extreme; I was in her Eyes the most admirable of Men, and nothing came near my Merit; I sometimes thought her Praises so excessive, that I begged of her, not to judge of me with so immoderately favourable a Prejudice, because I could never justify her Opinion, and she would perhaps end in Time with a Reduction of me in it beneath my real Worth, which could not but be disagreeable. At this she protested
loudly

loudly against my Injustice, accused me of an Excess of Modesty, and pretended that I had no other Fault but that of not being sensible of all that I deserved: I thought however, I had no Reproach to make myself upon that Article, and she certainly must have been very difficult in her Sense of Self-Love. Her Conduct in respect to me was a Sort of formal Worship, a Degree of Fanatick Devotion, an Enthusiasm; her Attentions for me were filled up with Delicacies, Refinements, Scruples, even to Superstition: This was always flattering, sometimes incommensurable; but at length it became tyrannical.

I suppose this violent Fervour of her's remitted, for she began to find that mine did not come up to it. However, whether out of Gratitude, or whether I had adopted her Ideas, I never before had employed such exquisite Attentions as I had for her; but that did not suffice, and our Commerce soon came to be nothing but a Vicissitude of Delicacies, of Reproaches, of Misses, and Reconciliations, insomuch that from Refinement to Refinement, we came to be one another's Torture: This often proceeded so far as to Projects of Rupture. We began at length to suspect that we were not so fit for one another as we had taken ourselves to be, and that might perhaps be because we resembled one another too much.

Things at last came to such a Point, that once after a sharp Expostulation, we ingenuously agreed that we could live no longer together, and that it was expedient for us to cease from seeing if we would continue to esteem, or perhaps love, otherwise we ran the Risk of ending with hating, one another. We mutually swore to an eternal Separation with as great Solemnity of Protestations and Oaths, as we had formerly employed to swear immortal Love: *Madam de Remicourt* returned me my Letters, and I went from her, to send her back her's.

I had never found myself so happy. I felt myself relieved, lightened of a Load that oppressed me, and

I breathed again like a Man just come out of Slavery.

I came home ; I took her Letters, but before sending them back, it came into my Head to read them, and I began with the first. I did not proceed far in them, before I found myself melted to Tenderness ; I went on, and my Emotion grew an Entrancement : I had not the Force to make an End of them ; I saw no longer before me any Thing but the Excess of Love which *Madam de Remicourt* had had for me. I concluded from thence, that it was impossible she could have ceased to love me, and that I should be the most ungrateful of Men ; if I did not fly to ask her a thousand Pardons : I went immediately to her.

The less the Step I was taking was expected, the more it was likely to affect *Madam de Remicourt* : She received me with incredible Transports ; I wanted to ask her Forgiveness, and she would absolutely take all the Wrong upon herself : Never was a Reconciliation more animated ; and we passed several Days in a State as delicious as any we had ever known.

Our Felicity was not long lived ; the Storms began again, and we parted this time for good. I remember, that before I now returned her Letters, I read over the last, that is to say, those I had not read at the Time of the first Quarrel I mentioned, because the first had been sufficient to bring me back to her. If I had on that Day finished their Perusal, I had not been tempted to renew with her ; I should have seen that if the first were full of Transports, the last only breathed a Remission of Fervor : They were mere Rhapsodies of all the common Places of Gallantry, employed to cover a growing Coolness, and which are the Proofs of it.

Madam de Remicourt is the only Woman for whom I preserved a Regret mixed with Compassion : She was in that Rank of Life in which they consider themselves as Women of Quality, but whom those of the Court never take for any Thing more than
Citizens.

Citizen
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Citizens. I have afterwards met her in Life, and even seen her with Friendship: She has assured me, that since her breaking off with me, she had observed the strictest Regularity of Conduct without being able in the Companies she kept, to wipe off the Impression they had of her past Life; that they no longer gave her the same Reception; that they even seemed inclined to drop her, and that her Life was a very melancholic one.

How many Women are there of the middle Rank who lose themselves irrecoverably, for the sake of having rather the Ridicule than the Pleasure of sharing the Follies of high Life? A City-Lady, for Example, after having appeared on the Lists of Persons of Fashion, has no Means left to restore her Reputation, as if she had not gone out of her Class. Her Equals exclaim against her; yet more out of a Sense of Jealousy than of Honour; and the Women of Quality would be glad to punish her for having had the Insolence to live like them, and set up a Competition to their Prejudice. A notorious false Step in a City Lady, and an Act of Cowardice in a military Man, are such Blots as there is no retrieving; whereas Gallantry is often, in a more elevated Rank, nothing more than a Forerunner of Devotion, and of the Respect which follows it.

I think that *Madam de Remicourt* has since betaken herself to Devotion, and with her Temper she must be as tormented, and as miserable in it, as in Love.

Without insisting longer on a Detail of my Misguidances, I return to the Project I had formed of embracing a properer Way of Life. Fashion, and the Contagion of the Times, had engaged me in the Career of Coxcombry. I had afterwards introduced into it a Sort of Design, of Method, and of System; all which I now resolved to employ to get out of it, and create myself a new Existence.

One would hardly imagine, what yet is true, that one is not always free to abjure one's Folly with a high Hand, which passes for a ridiculous Ostentation with a certain Part of the Publick. They have

imagined a Sort of Decency in not renouncing one's wrongheaded Habits too abruptly: One must veer round to Reason by Degrees. In this Sense of Things, I began to employ myself seriously in the Concerns of my Fortune, to apply myself to the Duties of my Post in the Army, and to break out at length of that impetuous Whirl that hurried me round to all the Objects, except those which ought to have fixed me.

I had more than once remarked, that the Army-Service in *France* is the Profession the most honoured, the most followed, and the least brought to Perfection. It will always be that of the Nobility, because it is it's Origin, because the Founders of the Monarchy were Conquerors, and the Constitution of the State is Military. This Profession is exercised with Honour, rarely with Application, and almost never as an Object of Study. Most of those who give themselves up to it with the most Ardour, never suspect that War exacts any thing but Courage, and believe that having grown old, is Experience.

The Subalterns roll from Garrison to Garrison, where Idleness constitutes their Existence: They know the Detail of the Regiment in which they serve, and never once think that there is such a Thing as the Art of War. Those whom their Birth has placed in the higher Posts, have no more Idea of it, and make their Pleasures the Expletive of their Idleness. So that all that Valour which is natural to the Nation, would be often useless, and sometimes pernicious to it, if from Time to Time there did not spring up some happy Geniuses, who were born with the Talent, and acquire the Art of employing so many Arms and so much Courage, for the Defence and Glory of the State.

These Reflections occurred to me in the better Time, for that the Season of opening the Campaign was drawing near. I joined my Regiment sooner than ordinary. It is well enough known, that there is no Colonel that is not sincerely persuaded that his

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own Regiment is the best composed of any in the Army, the Exercise the best performed, the Discipline the exactest, and Subordination the best established in it, and especially, that all this fine Order is owing to his Care and Management.

I was more than any one in this Opinion ; and certain it is, that nobody had more than me been the Model of his Regiment. I used to applaud myself for it ; but when I returned to it with the Spirit of Duty, I was surprized at the little Discipline I found there : Courage was the only military Quality that showed itself with Distinction.

As I had now got into the Disposition and Train of making Reflections, I was not long at perceiving that I was the principal Author of all the Disorder that struck me. All even down to the lowest Subalterns were my Imitators, and had copied me so faithfully, that they were all Men of Gaiety and Pleasure, scarce one of them was an Officer ; but then indeed, there were none of them but were qualified for fine Gentlemen as the World goes ; most of them, like their Model, would have been full of Airs at Court, impertinent in Town, and insupportable every where to Men of Sense.

I had too great a Share in all the Irregularity that now hurt me, to have a Right of magisterially re-proving it ; I resolved then to extirpate this Grievance in the Way I had given rise to it ; that is to say, by my Example.

After having allowed the first Days to the Pleasure of seeing myself amongst my Comrades again, I applied myself to gain their Confidence, with Regard to our Duties, as if I had had it with Regard to Pleasures.

I told them that I greatly desired that henceforward there should be more Application to the Service than I found there was, that I requested it in Friendship, and that it was the greatest Mark they could give me of theirs. They answered me satisfactorily enough ; but probably they took it from me as nothing more than a Caprice of Reason that was not to have

have the Privilege of lasting longer with me than any other, for I did not perceive that my Exhortations produced much Effect. I complained to them of it with Dryness, and finding that operating nothing, I spoke with Harshness, and addressing myself to one of the principal Officers, I treated him publicly with rather too violent an Haughtiness: I thought the Example would be the more striking, as he was the Officer the most esteemed of the whole Corps.

This was doubtless what engaged me to single him out preferable to any, to make the more Impression upon the rest: I ought however to have considered that this Officer, who was of an obscure Birth, had not risen but through a Conduct equal to his Courage, that I had done him Services, and that if these impose Obligations of Gratitude on those who receive them, they also exact Delicacy from those who confer them. I had exhausted the Chapter of Aids, I began even to have Sentiments, but I was yet ignorant of social Deferences.

I was not long before I made these Reflections, and was angry with myself for my Impetuosity. I would then have made a publick Excuse to this Officer, if I had not been afraid of nipping thereby, in the Bud, my Project of re-establishing Subordination. But I resolved to repair by Dint of Distinctions, the Mortification I might have occasioned to a worthy Man.

I was in these Dispositions, when the ensuing Morning he came to me: ' You cannot,' said he to me, ' be a Stranger to the Motives of my waiting upon you. Do not however, imagine I take this Step without Repugnance: I have Obligations to you, I would sacrifice my Life for you, but I ought not to sacrifice my Honour, and that you have wounded. I know the Distance there is between you and me; more Equality would render me less sensible: Some indeed of my Comrades might in their Birth and Fortune find wherewith to indemnify their Acquisition; but for me, who have neither Birth nor

' Fortune,

‘ Fortune, and who have no Existence but in my Honour, I am not at Liberty to be insensible to it.’

My first Emotion was that of Indignation, that a Subaltern should have a Right to demand Satisfaction of his Superior for an Offence, let it be what it would, of which the Service might have been the Occasion. Subordination is doubtless not regulated amongst us as it should be, and I was on the Point of treating him with yet more Haughtiness than I had done; but as there are in our Manners certain delicate Points, in which it would have been dangerous for a Man of my Age to listen to Reason in Contempt of Prejudice, I answered this Officer coldly, that I was ready to give him Satisfaction: I dressed myself that Instant; we went out together, and fought in a Place of Privacy. The Combat was not long, I was dangerously wounded and fell; he ran immediately to procure me what Assistance I wanted, and had me brought Home.

I did not doubt but he would immediately fly for it, and my first Care was to make a Sign to him to draw near me. He did so with all the Marks of Despair on his Countenance: I whispered to him, that I ordered him not to absent himself, which would not only furnish Proofs against him, and that he might remain secure in my Discretion. Upon this he staid by me, but his Obedience visibly stood him dear in Remorse; he seemed torn to Pieces with it, and the Excess of his Sorrow would alone have been enough to discover the Truth, which by the by was a Secret to nobody. It is upon these Occasions that one says nothing, because one knows every Thing.

I was for several Days in the greatest Danger, and it was not yet over, when the Count *de Canaples* was introduced to me: I was equally moved and confused at his Kindness for Reasons I shall take Notice of in course.

He was with Madam *de Canaples* at one of his Country-seats some Miles distant from the Town, in which my Regiment was then quartered, and upon the News of my Adventure, he was come to see me

me and take me Home with him, where he judged I could be more conveniently lodged till I should be recovered, than in a Garison Town.

Scarce was I in a Condition to bear the Removal, when he gave his Orders for it without consulting me, and told me with the Authority he derived from his Age and Friendship, that I must go with him. I rather then suffered myself to be conducted than I consented to it; I did not myself know what were my Dispositions: The Fund of Tenderneſs which I had preſerved for Madam *de Canaples* inſtilled a ſecret Satisfaction into my Soul; but the Reſpect I owed her, the Neglect I had ſhown her for ſeveral Years, made me bluſh inwardly to appear before a Woman in regard to whom I had contracted thoſe Wrongs that offend the Sentiment, and of which ſhe muſt have the quicker Senſe, as ſhe had too much Pride to reproach me with them, and that ſhe had made it to herſelf a Point of Duty to forget the Motive of them.

And indeed ever ſince I had plunged into a Torrent of Diſſipation, the Houſe of the Count *de Canaples* was the Houſe in which I was the moſt rarely ſeen; I reſorted to it no more but out of Duty, and where one comes to make no Viſits but of that Sort, one ſoon falls off to the not making even ſo many as Duty exaſts.

I did not doubt but that the Counteſs had remarked it, and I did not hold myſelf ſo cheap as to imagine ſhe had remarked it with Indifference. As to the Count *de Canaples* he was the moſt eſſential of Men himſelf, the leaſt a Dealer in Ceremony, and who exaſted the leaſt of it from others: He loved me, he had done me Services, and that was enough for him to reckon upon my Friendſhip and my Gratitude. As to any Thing elſe he took very little Care whether I paid him any Court or not. He placed my Abſence to the Aceount of my Pleaſures which he looked upon as an Excuse, and as the Privilege of my Age.

Madam *de Canaples* received me with all the Marks of the moſt tender Friendſhip: She had for me all
poſſible

possible Attentions, and such as she could not have exceeded in towards the dearest Lover, or the dearest Son. The dormant Sentiments I had never lost, and which so easily awoken towards the Object of one's first Love, soon revived afresh in my Heart. I judged that she had never ceased loving me, that my Dissipations so far from having cured her, had only irritated her Passion, that I had had too much Impatience, and that if I had persevered some Time in my Designs upon her, I should have accomplished my Triumph over her. Thence I concluded that my Happiness had been no more than deferred, and for being so, was only the surer. I was no longer, as before, that timid, modest Youth, presuming little on himself, and whose Desires were to be restrained by Respect, or by his own Virtue.

I was indeed fixed enough in my Resolution to lay down the despicable Character of the Man of Gallantry, in which, for some Years, I had led the Fashion, and blazed away with such a dazzling Scandal; but I had no Thoughts of renouncing my Pleasures. On the contrary, I imagined that a worthy Attachment was the most suitable to the new Plan of Life I was projecting.

Full of these Ideas, I resolved upon explaining, and renewing with *Madam de Canaples*; for I saw not the least Difficulty in it. I believed myself so sure of her Heart, I was so persuaded of the Satisfaction that my Return to her would give her, that I thought I ought, merely out of Generosity, to ask her Pardon for my Crimes, by way at least, of salving her Pride.

The Image I prefigured to myself of the delicious Life I was going to lead, soon restored me to my Health; and as it was no difficult Matter to find an Occasion of seeing *Madam de Canaples* alone, I told her one Day, that I was much ashamed of having had so little Sense of the Happiness of her liking me, and of having preferred to the Blessing of living with her, those vain Amusements to which I had delivered myself

myself up ; that my Remorse for it was I was going to continue, and exhale myself in the warmest Protestations, but I was so surprized to see *Madam de Canaples* look upon me with an awful Haughtiness, that I had not the Assurance to go on. She did not even give me the Liberty of it, for she left me that Moment, and that without vouchsafing me any other Answer than casting an Eye upon me of the utmost Sternness and Disdain.

Let any one figure to himself a Man full of Presumption, spoil'd, intimately convinced of his own Merit, and who sees himself humbled by one to whom he believed he was going graciously to show Mercy ! I was stunned with my Reception, yet was it not my Vanity that suffered the most : I felt more Sorrow than Shame, because I had as much Love as Respect for *Madam de Canaples*.

As soon as I recovered myself, I fell into a Number of Reflexions on the ill Success of my Step ; I tried to penetrate whether I ought absolutely to renounce all Hope, and I remained under this Undecision without being able to take any Resolution.

From that Instant however, *Madam de Canaples*, took care to give me no Opportunity of finding her alone, and instead of the Friendliness, with which she used to treat me before the World, she now confined herself to Politeness, and I saw that nothing but Prudence hinder'd her from carrying it the Length of Disdain.

I conceived then that I ought to renounce my Pretensions, but as I could not bear to think of renouncing either her Friendship or Esteem, I sought for nothing now but to express to her my Repentance of having displeased her ; I flattered myself with proving it to her by my Conduct, but as I was soon to set out for the Army with *Count de Canaples*, I did not think the short Time I was to stay at her House, would be sufficient for *Madam de Canaples* to be able to perceive in my Conduct alone the Dispositions I was in with regard to her, so that I determined to speak to her, whatever Precaution she might take against it.

Two

Two Days after upon seeing her going alone into her Park, I followed her, without her observing it, and I suffered her to engage her Walk far enough in it, for her not to have Time to return so quickly to the Castle, as that I should not be able first to explain with her. I took my Measures so well, that I traversed upon her, just at the End of one of the Walks. As soon as she discovered me, she turned off to avoid me. ‘Madam,’ said I, following her, ‘vouchsafe me a hearing.’ Upon this, finding that she could not escape me, she stopped, and looking at me with an angry Haughtiness, ‘I think it pretty extraordinary,’ said she, ‘that I am not at liberty in my own House, and that you should dare to follow me without my Leave.’ ‘I am persuaded,’ said I, ‘Madam, that the Motive of my Rashness will obtain me your Pardon of it. I have had the Misfortune to offend you; I am sufficiently punished by my Repentance, but I should be too severely so were you to be ignorant of it. I could not have the Courage to go, without acquainting you with it; I should be too unhappy, if whilst I renounce the dearest Sentiments of my Heart, I could not preserve some Right at least to your Compassion, to your Esteem, and if I durst say it, to your Friendship. I promise you that you shall never have Reason to regret the Forgiveness I entreat of you, and that whatever my Sentiments may be, you never shall have any Reproaches to make me upon them.’ ‘Neither will I make you any,’ replied the Countess, ‘since you acknowledge your Fault; I forget it from this Instant. Let us say no more of it; and be assured that, upon that Condition, you shall never have a better Friend than myself.’

The Gentleness of her Answer having re-spirited me; ‘Will you permit me,’ said I, ‘Madam, to ask you for what Reason you have observed towards me two such different Manners of Behaviour upon the same Subject? when some Years ago, I
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' durst declare to you the Impression you had made
 ' upon my Heart; you forbid me, I confess, all
 ' Hopes, but you spoke to me, at least, with some
 ' Concern; your Goodness engaged you to try to
 ' comfort me for the severe Law which your Virtue
 ' prescribed to me. What have I done since, more
 ' than declaring to you those Sentiments which
 ' their Constancy has rather rendered more excusa-
 ' ble? yet, instead of Compassion for them, with
 ' what Scorn have you not received my Profession of
 ' them? Am I become contemptible in your Eyes?
 ' Pardon me, Madam, if I dare recall to you your
 ' former Goodness, and if I beg of you to clear up
 ' this Point to me. If the least Doubt remained
 ' with you, upon an Article so important to me,
 ' how could I flatter myself with preserving your
 ' Friendship, and consequently the Esteem to which
 ' you permit me to pretend?

' Though the Question you put to me,' said Madam
 ' *de Canaples*, ' already amounts almost to a Breach
 ' of the Promise you have just made me, not to recall
 ' the past to me, I depend enough upon your Word
 ' for the future, not to deny you the Explanation
 ' you desire upon a Subject which must never again
 ' be called up between us.

' If I received, with a Sort of Indulgence, that
 ' Declaration, which, as you term it, you durst make
 ' me some Years ago, that Indulgence was owing
 ' precisely to your not having dared to make it. Not
 ' Rashness, not Self-conceit, and less yet was it Hope
 ' that guided you; you yielded to a Sentiment un-
 ' known to yourself, to an involuntary Emotion:
 ' A Suprize, in which we both partook, added the
 ' blushing, made us obey an Impression, of which
 ' the Effect alone unveiled to us the Principle. But
 ' at present, that your Acquaintance with the World
 ' has instructed, and perhaps perverted you, at pre-
 ' sent, that you know your Duties, and ought to
 ' respect mine; the Profession of your Sentiments,
 ' which might be innocent in their Birth, and per-
 ' haps flattering for me, had my Condition per-
 ' mitted,

‘mitted it, could now be no better than an injurious Affront, that would render you criminal and contemptible in my Eyes. Is it possible for you to forget, without blushing, what you owe to me, to the Count *de Canaples*, to his Goodness, to his Confidence, I go further, to the Mistake he is in about you, which would render you more guilty than if you was suspected by him?

Though the Discourse, or at least the Design of Madam *de Canaples* in it, did not tend to inspire me with Hope, perhaps some Glimpse of it stole into my Heart, for I sought to prolong the Conversation. It was at least a Satisfaction but to talk to her of my Passion, and though one was to be sure of no Return, it is already a Favour to entertain the Person one loves with it. I was then going to answer, when Madam *de Canaples* imposed Silence on me. ‘Break we off here,’ said she, ‘perhaps here has already been too much said; remember your Word of Honour, and let this be the last of it forever.’ We were now near the Castle, and she went in, I following her without daring to reply to her, and we rejoined the Company.

From that very Moment I was more than ever taken up with the Thought of Madam *de Canaples*, but I never attempted to speak to her again of my Sentiments; I should have been sorry or perplexed to have found myself alone with her, in the Fear of angering her with my Speeches, or of rendering myself suspected by the Manner in which I should have kept Silence. I confined myself to the loving her in Secret, to the proving her my Respect and Submission, without examining what might be the Fruit of my Perseverance.

The Manner in which I lived with Madam *de Canaples* was an hard enough Constraint, yet I quitted it with an infinite Regret, when obliged to set out for the Army with the Count *de Canaples*.

I served almost all the Campaign under his Orders, and as he did not love writing, he entrusted me to answer for him all the Letters he received from his Wife

Wife; I acquitted myself of this Commission with the most lively Pleasure, but with as much Simplicity as any ordinary Secretary might have done; I hardly allowed myself to mention my Respect to her, so fearful was I of mixing with it other Sentiments which she had forbid me to recall to her. The Count *de Canaples* had not the least Share of Influence in this Discretion of mine, for he did not so much as give himself the Trouble of reading what I wrote; but he soon remarked that his Wife made in her Letters not the least Mention of me; he seemed to resent it for me, and desired me to reproach her, for him, with it in the first Letter. I had myself taken Notice of this Omission as well, but had not been so piqued at it as he was; I knew that Lady was incapable of such an Unpoliteness; she had not allowed me to depend upon her Friendship, so that her Procedure could neither spring from Disdain nor Indifference: I concluded then from thence, that she only avoided writing about me in the Fear of expressing too great a Concern for me. I saw, in short, what she wanted to conceal from me, and saw it through the very Precaution she took to conceal it from me: The Precautions of honest Minds are almost always Indiscretions.

I took Care however not to make her any of the Reproaches which the Count *de Canaples* had desired of me; but when I had presented him with the Answer I had made, he asked me, if I had taken his Wife to Task as she deserved. 'I think I have,' said I carelessly. 'I am glad of it,' said he, 'let us see a little how you have treated her.' With this he took the Letter and read it. 'What the Devil!' said he, after perusing it, 'here is not a Word about it. Here is fine standing upon Ceremony with her; however it shall not go off so, I will add myself what is wanting to this Epistle.' He took the Pen, and wrote to Madam *de Canaples*, that she did not deserve the Attachment I had for her by the Indifference she shewed for me; that he had all imaginable Obligations to me; that I was become necessary

to him ; that he could not too much praise my Friendship, nor give me Marks enough of his ; that he was under a Necessity of making her these Reproaches himself because she deserved, and I refused my Hand them. He ended with exhorting her to love me a little more than she did.

I am ignorant of what her Answer to this would have been, for she had not the Time to make one, as almost upon the Neck of it she received too concerned a Piece of News to be taken up with any Thing else. We were at the Eve of a Battle, and had not judged proper to say any Thing of it to Madam *de Canaples*, that we might spare her the Alarms about it. And indeed there was the next Day a very warm Action in which the Count *de Canaples* and I were wounded.

Madam *de Canaples* was informed at the same Time as the Public, of the News of the Battle, and her Husband was too considerable an Officer not to be named in the public Papers : There she saw him in the List of the Wounded, and receiving no particular Letter to calm her Fears, she set out, and in a few Days after us arrived at the Town to which we had been removed.

The Condition in which she found the Count *de Canaples* penetrated her with the sharpest Affliction. His Wound that, at first, had not appeared dangerous, was grown so, to a Degree that there were no Hopes for him : The Count himself was sensible of it ; he expressed to his Wife how much he was obliged to her for her affectionate hurrying to see him, requested her Friendship for me, desired her to make me his last Adieus, to give me all the Assistance I might want, and expired in her Arms.

I was not a Witness to this mournful Scene, though I was in the same House : My Wound confined me sore against my Will to my Bed ; but in my Life I never experienced a more severe or sincerer Grief than for the Death of the Count *de Canaples*. I had no feeling then but for the Loss of my Friend, and in Madam *de Canaples* I considered nothing but a Woman
man

man to whom the Memory of her Husband deserved to be dear. It seemed as if the Love I had for her was suspended in my Heart, that it might leave it entire to Friendship.

Madam *de Canaples* had, at her Arrival, made me no more than one Visit, after having seen her Husband; and from that Moment, to that of his Death she had not quitted his Bedside. But now so afflicting an Object not permitting her to stay longer in his Apartment, she passed into mine. We joined in our Tears, and it was only by sharing her Grief, that I tried to comfort her. She acquainted me with the last Sentiments of the Count *de Canaples*, and expressed to me how sorry she was that her Situation, and that Decency, did not allow of taking herself the Care of me I might need, and the same Day set out again for her Seat in the Country.

She was scarce gone, when the Count *de Canaples's* Will was put into my Hands, in which he named me his Executor; and having none but very distant Relations, he left all his Estate in general to his Wife. I wrote to her that Instant to inform her of it, and withal, that as soon as I was in a Condition to bear the Journey, I would wait upon her, and give her an Account of her Affairs. Accordingly I went to her about a Month afterwards. It did not at all appear to me, that the affluent Fortune, of which she now saw herself the Mistress, had diminished her Sense of the Loss she had sustained. But if she was so little affected with the Splendour of her Circumstances, several about the Court, who had Views of Establishment, had not the same Indifference to it. Madam *de Canaples* had in her own Person, a Merit sufficient to pretend to every thing: and the new Advantages she held from Fortune made her, that few had a Right to aspire to her. Handsome, still young, for she was scarce two and thirty, powerfully rich, and enjoying that Esteem, which a good Conduct, when constantly supported, always procures to a Woman of Virtue, she was addressed by all who could offer themselves without Presumption, and there was not one to whom she

ſhe did not peremptorily forbid all Hope ; inſomuch, that they ſoon looked upon her as a Woman determined to enjoy tranquilly her Opulence, in the Independence of Widowhood ; and I believed it like the reſt.

I had never been ſo much in love with her as I now was, becauſe I had never known her ſo thoroughly ; and yet I durſt leſs ſpeak to her of it than before. The Rank and State of thoſe whom ſhe had reſuſed were not likely to give me much Hope for myſelf : And there would have been yet more Preſumption and Offence in daring to mention my Paſſion to her, without owning at the ſame time that I durſt aſpire to an Alliance with her. I reſtrained myſelf then to my Endeavours to become more and more pleaſing to her, without carrying my Views further.

There had already elapſed a reaſonable Time that I had lived with her, and as it would not have been decent for me to paſs as it were my Life with her, without the Pretext of Affairs, I had not haſtened the Concluſion of them. We were ready to open the Campaign again, and I ſhould have been glad before I ſet out for it, to be leſs uncertain than I was about my Fate. Madam *de Canaples* herſelf furniſhed me the Opportunity of it.

I had had the Diſcretion not to ſay a Word to her upon the different Propoſals of Marriage which had been made to her, when ſhe herſelf made me the Confidence of them. ‘ I have not been ſurprized,’ ſaid ſhe to me, ‘ that it ſhould be ſuppoſed that my ‘ preſent Fortune ſhould turn my Thoughts on ſome ‘ ſplendid Eſtabliſhment ; but neither would ſuch an ‘ one procure me Happineſs, or flatter my Vanity, ‘ perhaps too I have that of believing that I ſtand in ‘ need of none. However that may be, I propoſe to ‘ make quite another Uſe of the Count *de Canaples*’s ‘ Generoſity to me, an Uſe that ſhall be worthy of ‘ myſelf, and of the Reſpect which I preſerve for his ‘ Memory. It is that Reſpect alone which has engaged

' gaged me to accept the Bequeathal of his Estate.
 ' Though he had none but Relations too remote to
 ' expect, with any Certainty, his leaving it to them ;
 ' if they have had no Part in his Disposál of it, I will
 ' have them receive the same Advantages from it ;
 ' and as there is none nearer than yourself, or that he
 ' would prefer to you, I propose to contribute to your
 ' Advancement, to put you into a Condition of mar-
 ' rying some young Lady of a Birth equal to your
 ' own, and thus enable you to dispence with mis-
 ' allaying yourself ; which is a Sacrifice always dis-
 ' agreeable to a Man of Quality, and for which he is
 ' rarely indemnified by the Consequences.

' Ah! Madam,' said I to her, ' can you in one
 ' Breath shew me so much Goodness and so much
 ' Rigour? You say, you propose to contribute
 ' to my Happiness, and you know there is but
 ' one Way to assure it to me. You are not ig-
 ' norant that my first Sentiment was that of
 ' loving you ; Time, Experience, and the Parallel
 ' of you with all other Women have but strengthen-
 ' ed it in my Heart. I durst, once and no more,
 ' re-mention it to you, when more carried away by
 ' my Passion, than animated with Hope ; but the
 ' Remorse of having offended you, my Respect for
 ' you and for the Count *de Canaples*, my Reflexions
 ' on the Friendship with which he honoured me, had
 ' made me since keep strictly silence, and even com-
 ' bat my Sentiments without Success. When we
 ' had the Misfortune to lose him, I felt, at the first,
 ' nothing but my Regrets and your Affliction ; but
 ' at length, as that Passion for you which never relax-
 ' ed whilst he lived, is now become innocent, I have
 ' since that been only restrained by Decency. In
 ' offering myself to you, I should not have been a-
 ' fraid of being suspected of any Self-Interest, but of
 ' having too little consulted your's. The advanta-
 ' geous Matches which you have refused, and of
 ' which I was not ignorant, have made me see, with
 ' deep Concern, how unsuitable my Pretensions
 ' must be to you: But the Marks of your Goodness

' you

‘ you are now pleased to give me, inspire me with
 ‘ the Confidence I needed. Dispenſe then, Madam!
 ‘ with my Acceptance, or fill up the Measure of it,
 ‘ by granting me your Hand. I ought not to accept
 ‘ any thing but on that Condition.’

‘ How could you imagine,’ replied Madam *de Canaples*, ‘ that an Augmentation of my Fortune could
 ‘ render me more conſiderable in my own Eyes than
 ‘ I was before ; and that if I had at one Time judg-
 ‘ ed you worthy of my Choice, I ſhould at another
 ‘ Time think differently, without other Reason than
 ‘ the Caprice of Chance ? Believe me, I eſteem my-
 ‘ ſelf enough not to make the Opinion I have of my-
 ‘ ſelf depend on Events. What then could now moſt
 ‘ offend me, is the Repugnance you expreſs at re-
 ‘ ceiving ſuch ſlight Services from me. Your Deli-
 ‘ cacy might be well-placed with regard to any one but
 ‘ me : but the Offers I make you are but a
 ‘ natural Diſpoſal, a fair and lawful Uſe of the Count
 ‘ *de Canaples*’s Fortune. And were it otherwiſe, if
 ‘ you eſteem me as much as you ſay you do, you
 ‘ ought not to be afraid, nor think it any Humilia-
 ‘ tion to be obliged to me. Friendſhip does not leſs
 ‘ prove itſelf by the Favours we receive from a
 ‘ Friend, than by thoſe one confers upon him. An
 ‘ Over-Delicacy in this Point is an injurious Diffi-
 ‘ dence, and one ought ſometimes to ſacrifice it to
 ‘ the Pleaſure a Friend has in obliging one.’

‘ No, Madam,’ ſaid I to her, ‘ I could never bluſh
 ‘ for being obliged to you : Any Concern you would
 ‘ pleaſe to take for my Welfare, could not but do
 ‘ me honour ; but I expect yet greater Things
 ‘ from your Goodneſs. Why expreſs any Care a-
 ‘ bout merely my Fortune, when it is in your Power
 ‘ to give me Happineſs ? If any one has been ſo for-
 ‘ tunate as to touch your Heart, mine will be pierc’d
 ‘ at it : I ſhall reſpect your Taſte, and condemn my-
 ‘ ſelf to Silence. But if I may flatter myſelf with that
 ‘ not being the Caſe, let me have leave to recal to
 ‘ your Remembrance, that you once deſigned to own
 ‘ to me that your Heart was favourable to me. If

‘ your Duty was once contrary to me, it is so no longer ; render me the happiest of Men, by uniting your Condition with mine.’

‘ As I have not to blush for my Sentiments for you,’ answered Madam *de Canaples*, ‘ I will not seek to dissemble them. You are the only one for whom I have had those which were due to none but the *Cerint de Canaples*, and which I should have had for him, if Esteem and Endeavours were capable of begetting them. The little Connexion there has been between you and me, since I perceived my Taste for you, has hindered perhaps its becoming a Passion, which without making me criminal might have made me unhappy. Yet have you always been dear to me, and the Sentiments of which I have contracted a Habit for you, will, without disturbing my Tranquillity, preserve me from the like Sensibility for any other. I give you all the Rights that Friendship can have, and shall be very much flattered with your’s.

‘ You know I have always talked to you with Candour ; I am now going to give you a fresh Proof of it : Though I am persuaded that my Sentiments will be always the same, the Habit of living with you, and the Liberty of giving myself up to them, might heighten them, but I know by Experience the Power that Duty has over me, and I am sure, that as soon as you shall have married another, and that it will not be right for me to look upon you other than as a Friend ; nothing will then be able to vitiate the Habit, the Innocence, and the Tranquillity of my Friendship for you. Do not then let us think of an Engagement which would not make our Happiness, and in order to lose all Idea of it, let me prevail on you to comply with the Views of Establishment which I have proposed to you.’

‘ No, Madam, said I, ‘ I can think of no Engagement but with you ; it must most certainly make my Happiness ; upon what then do you judge it contrary to your’s ? Upon the Disproportion,’ said she,

she, ' of our Ages ; though it may not appear now so
 ' considerable, it will one Day become more so, or
 ' will be deemed such, which comes to the same Thing
 ' as to the Publick. The Advantages of Fortune
 ' which I mean to procure you, which I hold so cheap,
 ' but which the World holds so dear, would make
 ' me be looked upon as a silly Woman who could
 ' not resist the Weakness of purchasing the Complai-
 ' sance of a young Man, at the Hazard of being one
 ' Day or another exposed to his Sights : Now I chuse
 ' that you should owe all to my Friendship.'

' What Madam, replied I, ' you whose Soul,
 ' whose Virtues have so little Affinity with the Ideas
 ' of the Vulgar, will you submit to be swayed by its
 ' Opinion only when it is contrary to my Happi-
 ' ness ?'

' That Opinion,' replied Madam *de Canaples*, ' is
 ' but too much founded on Experience. I should
 ' besides have every Thing to fear from the Diffe-
 ' rence of our Tempers, from the Vivacity of your's,
 ' from the Dissipation of which you have contract-
 ' ed the Habit, and perhaps the Necessity. All these
 ' Pleasures which you think you have worn out,
 ' either from the having enjoyed them, or pure-
 ' ly from the Facility of enjoying them, may have be-
 ' come necessary even whilst they are grown insipid
 ' to you. How great would be my Grief ! if after
 ' flattering myself with being loved as constantly as I
 ' should believe I deserved it, and as I should love
 ' myself, I was to see you substitute to Sentiments,
 ' Proceedings so much the more cruel, in that they
 ' bar those Complaints of which they are the bitterest
 ' Motives. I understand perfectly well that Sort of
 ' Respect with which certain perfidious Husbands
 ' treat their Wives, and from which they have the
 ' Effrontery and Baseness to take Honour to them-
 ' selves. In these Times a Wife treated with Res-
 ' pect by her Husband, is but another Term for an
 ' unfortunate Woman too decent to complain of cer-
 ' tain Wrongs, and who respects herself enough to
 ' devour her Affliction in Silence : And indeed what
 ' would she gain by appealing to that natural Equity

• which is so different from human Practice? since
 • the most unjust, the most authentically contempt-
 • tible Husband often finds nevertheless Protection
 • in the Laws, and Approbation amongst Men:
 • He must be scandalously in the Wrong indeed, be-
 • fore he passes for being so. I am willing to believe
 • that you would be less unjust than others, but for
 • me at least it is not fitting to put it to the Trial; so
 • Sir, I ought not to’ Do not I conjure
 • you,’ said I to her, make an End of your Speech;
 • let me nourish the Hope that you will one Day con-
 • sent to crown my Wishes: The Idea of it will con-
 • tribute to render me estimable, by the Endeavours I
 • will employ to become worthy of you.’

Madam *de Canaples* smiled and said nothing: From
 that Moment I applied myself more and more to in-
 gratiate myself with her, and without speaking posi-
 tively to her of my Passion, I lived with her upon that
 Footing of Intimacy, which, without being that of
 Love, is much superior to simply that of Friendship.
 Nor did I ever more sensibly feel how greatly Virtue,
 Love, respect, and Confidence contribute to make one
 happy.

There was however a Necessity of tearing myself
 away from Madam *de Canaples*, that I might join the
 Army. There I more than ever attached myself to
 my Duty, that I might dissipate the Tedioufness of
 being separated from her, and amuse my Impatience
 of seeing her again.

I was not long before I remarked that my Applica-
 tion to my Duty gained me Regard, but I perceived
 at the same Time with a Surprise, which I should not
 at this Time have, that the Esteem which one may
 merit, rarely goes without the Jealousy of Rivals in
 the Road of Fortune, and who occasionally turn one’s
 Enemies upon it.

My past Follies had, whilst they procured me Cen-
 surers amongst the Men of Sense, engaged them some-
 times to give me good Advice. But scarce had I be-
 gan to form to myself a reasonable Reputation, before
 I gave Umbrage to my Competitors; I was soon
 looked

looked upon as one of a shrewd Ambition. The former Giddinesses of Conduct, which had narrowly missed ruining me, were now construed as the Effects of a long-headed Pre-concertal, and refined Policy. How often have I seen bestowed on the most laudable Behaviour Interpretations more dangerous than an open Accusation, which would furnish a Man with an Occasion to confound his Enemies? It is less cruel for a Man of Honour to be accused than suspected, and I should not dare to decide, whether the Ill one actually commits at Court, is not less prejudicial than that of which one may stand there falsely accused.

I was however very indifferent to what might be thought of me : Love shuts up the Heart to all other Sentiments. I had no other Pleasure than writing continually to *Madam de Canaples*. At first it was with a great deal of Circumspection ; but whether my Sentiments became too vehement for me long to contain them, or that Letters give more Courage, than Conversation does to a respectful Lover, I slid insensibly into a Liberty of mentioning my Passion to her, and soon I gave a Loose to it without Reserve. *Madam de Canaples* did not answer me in the same Strain, but made me no Reproaches for employing it, and I construed to myself a Right of returning to her in the Character of a declared and admitted Lover. I languished for that Moment, and as soon as the Army broke up I set out.

Some Days before my Departure *Madam de Canaples* wrote to me, that upon knowing that there was in a Convent in the Country, a young Lady who was a Relation to the Count *de Canaples*, she had taken her Home, that she had thought herself obliged to it, by her Respect for the Memory of her Husband, and by Humanity ; that *Miss de Foix*, for that was her Name, was an Orphan left with scarce wherewith to subsist, and so much the more to be pitied ; for that the Circumstance of being of a distinguished Family, which, may be a Resource and the Means of Fortune to a

Man, is an additional Misfortune to a young Woman of Quality, whose Birth at the same Time that it sets her above any Assistance of a certain Nature, places her beneath the Chance of a suitable Alliance; nay, often such have not even the Choice of Matches, for which, when obtained, they would be obliged to blush.

Madam de *Canaples* added, that what she had known of the Character of Miss *de Foix* since she had had her with her, made her well pleased with herself for the Step she had taken, and that she was persuaded I should give it my Approbation.

This Action of Madam *de Canaples* was of itself very laudable; but as she had no need of my Concurrence, I construed the Politeness which she showed me of desiring it, into a sort of Engagement on her Side, a genteel, obliging Manner of letting me know that she looked on our Interests as the same. I arrived then with a Certainty of the Happiness which I so ardently desired.

It was with the most sensible Pleasure I saw myself again with Madam *de Canaples*; and I had besides, that of observing that her Satisfaction was equal to mine. After having granted the first Moments to those Effusions of Heart, so necessary to it after its Sufferings by a long Absence, Madam *de Canaples* ordered Miss *de Foix* to be acquainted with my Arrival, and presented me to her.

I was struck with her Figure: Never had I seen a nobler one, nor a Countenance which united in it at once so much Modesty, and so much Stateliness; and her Conversation appeared to me full of Decency and good Sense.

As nothing weakens a Right more than to appear to doubt of it, and that one often establishes it by stating it as certain, I resolved the very next Day after my Arrival to press Madam *de Canaples* to consent to come to a Conclusion with me. I spoke to her of it with as much Urgency as Respect, and I threw into my Request that Confidence which be-
comes

comes none but those to whom the Liberty of hoping has been allowed. Madam *de Canaples* answered me much to the same Purpose as what she had told me before my Departure, but it was in the Tone of a Person who does not care to appear to have too lightly or too soon lost Sight of her Maxims, and who is not entirely averse to a Dissuasion from them. She added, that her Mourning being scarce over, there was no Decency in the Proposal I pressed her to embrace: In short, she employed none but those Reasons which leave one at Liberty to follow one's Inclinations. I conceived then that she would soon yield to my Importunities, and that I had now not long to wait. Instead of insisting further, I answered her rather in a Strain of Thanks, as if she had consented to what I had been proposing to her.

I passed a Month with her without a third in Company except now and then Miss *de Foix*, who by breaking the Duet, brought no more Interruption than was rather agreeable than unwelcome to us. Madam *de Canaples* and I grew every Day to conceive a higher Esteem for her, in proportion as we knew her the more.

This Esteem became insensibly on my Side, and without my perceiving it, more tender than I ought to have suffered it. I had had at first for Miss *de Foix* no further Consideration than what was due to her Birth, nor other Respect than what was due to Misfortunes; but soon a Sentiment more animated threw that Warmth into my Attentions which it is not for mere Generosity to inspire, and I thought I remarked that she received them with a Sensibility which mere Gratitude does not suggest.

What I did not yet distinctly myself perceive, was soon felt by Madam *de Canaples*: She knew my Temper too well for my Sentiments to escape her Penetration. And to say the Truth, I was naturally impatient in my Desires, and if they had kept up to the same Degree of Warmth, I should have importuned Madam *de Canaples* to conclude our Marriage, and I should not have given over till she had either
consented,

consented, or absolutely forbid me all Hope, which she had not done.

I had at first ingenuously taken my Conduct for a respectful Discretion; but respect is very different from a growing Coolness: A Woman who is the Object of it, is never mistaken in it. The Reserve which I soon remarked that Madam *de Canaples* assumed, in her Manner of Behaviour to me, opened my Eyes. I examined myself with Attention, I founded my Heart, I felt the Checks of Remorse, and could not dissemble to myself that I was in Love with Miss *de Foix*. I made myself all the just Reproaches, and I endeavoured to combat my Inclination: But the Reproaches we make to ourselves, being an inward Attestation to ourselves that we have still some Virtue left, compleat our Loss of it, because all as they flatter our Self-Love, they hinder us from despising, even whilst we condemn, ourselves: Besides, as I began to flatter myself that I was not indifferent to Miss *de Foix*, I thought it a Sort of Injustice to betray the Sentiments with which I might have inspired her: Insensibly I found myself more unfortunate than guilty. We are but too apt to judge ourselves with partial Indulgence when we are justified by our Heart, and only accused by our Reason.

There was then but one Measure I could take, worthy of Madam *de Canaples*, worthy of myself, and that was to make her a sincere Confession of the State of my Heart, and beg of her to pronounce upon my Fate.

This Measure Honour indeed prescribed to me, but how mortifying must it be to me! It was engaging me to own to a Woman so deserving of Respect, so deserving of Love, who had slighted the most advantageous Matches, and who had besides the Right of Obligations over me; it was engaging me, I say, to own to her, that a Passion born as it were with me, which Dissipation had not allayed, which Time ought to have strengthened, since it could not extinguish it, that this very Passion was to vanish only when it was become a Duty.

Duty. What Opinion must it not force Madam *de Canaples* to take up of my Character?

I saw the Necessity of making such a Confession, and shuddered at the Thoughts of it; yet the more I deferred it, the more indispensable it became, besides that by delaying it too long, I should lose the Merit of it. The Constraint which every Day augmented between Madam *de Canaples* and me, began to make itself be remarked by Miss *de Foix*, and even gave her a Sort of Perplexity.

Yet this so necessary Confession was not the only Consideration that disquieted me. What was to be the Fruit of this Step? Could I flatter myself with being sure that Miss *de Foix* would take up for me the Sentiments with which she had inspired me, or supposing her so inclined, was not my Levity sufficient to deter her from giving way to them?

Though Madam *de Canaples* had entered into no Engagement with me, I had implicitly contracted one with her, and my Proposal not having been formally rejected, she was free, and I was no longer so.

I was agitated with so many different Reflexions that I had all the Hardship imaginable to determine myself. At length I took a Resolution to go to her, and lay open to her the whole State of my Soul. But scarce was I in her Presence, but I found myself so confused and out of Heart, that I had not the Power to utter a Word. My Distress was but the more remarkable, and I was going to withdraw without saying any thing to her, if she had not herself broke the Ice by speaking to me.

‘Your Condition,’ said she, ‘moves my Compassion; I read in your Soul all that you are afraid to tell me, and I ought to spare you so cruel a Torture, since you are virtuous enough to feel it.’

At these Words I was penetrated with Grief: ‘Me virtuous,’ said I, ‘Madam! Is it possible for you to allow me yet the least Remains of Virtue? when I find in myself nothing but Matter of Remorse to a Degree that distracts me. But certainly I must have alarmed myself without Reason. No, it is not in Nature for me to cease to adore
‘you.

‘ you. I have been causelessly afraid of having yielded to the Charms of *Mis de Foix*. Deserving as she may of being beloved, there can be no preferring her to you. My Reason in this Moment protests against a Moment of Surprise.’ *Madam de Canaples* did not permit me to go on. ‘ Do you know,’ said she, ‘ that the Remorse you take the liberty of expressing is to me a most injurious Offence? Upon what is it that you judge that you have a Right to make yourself any Reproaches upon my Account?’ ‘ Ah! *Madam!*’ said I, pardon me, I have for you the most inviolable Respect, and surely my Design is not to’ ‘ Sir,’ replied she, interrupting me, ‘ I approve the Sentiments you have for *Mis de Foix*, and very much desire that she should return them: This is all you have my Permission to believe.’

At these Words she went away, and left me in the most painful of Situations. I saw that I had irrecoverably lost her, without foreseeing what I ought to expect from *Mis de Foix*. *Madam de Canaples* did not appear for the rest of the Day, and in the Evening she sent us word that she was indisposed, and wanted rest. *Mis de Foix* then and I remained together alone. The Concern we were in for the Health of *Madam de Canaples* made at first the Subject of our Conversation, and *Mis de Foix* seizing this Occasion to express her Gratitude for the Generosity of her Procedure towards her, I could not help interrupting her. ‘ *Madam de Canaples,*’ said I, ‘ *Mis*, is, I own, capable of the most generous Sentiments; but permit me to tell you that you cannot be considered as a Proof of them. If upon other Respects she deserves all possible Praise, she can only be envied for having had the Happiness to oblige you.’ ‘ I do not know,’ said *Mis de Foix*, ‘ whether I should have found so much Kindness to me in any one else, but it is happy for me to have experienced it from the only Person, who through the Honour I have of belonging to her, had a right to make me accept her Services.’ I had already discovered

discovered that Miss *de Foix* had a nobility of Spirit in her Character ; but I remarked besides, that her Situation threw a Sort of Haughtiness into it. Indigence even exalts those whom it cannot depress. Whether she was embarrassed with a Conversation upon a Subject ever a little mortifying for the most courageous Gratitude, or whether she judged the being alone with me not so decent for her, she left me, under Pretext of enquiring about Madam *de Canaples's* Health, and whether she might not see her.

I durst not follow her in the Fear of putting any Constraint upon her, or perhaps because I dreaded the Presence of Madam *de Canaples*. The Torture I now endured proceeded from loving two estimable Persons at one Time ; whilst this Division of my Heart already rendered me criminal in the Eyes of one, and might soon produce the same Effect upon the other.

The next Morning I learnt, that Miss *de Foix* had been shut up a considerable Time with Madam *de Canaples*. This last I sent to ask the Permission of seeing ; it was granted me, and notwithstanding the cruel Agitation I was in, I went to pay her those Devoirs I could not without Indecency have dispensed with. ‘ I believe,’ said she, as soon as I came into the Room, ‘ that you will soon be happy, I have disposed Miss *de Foix* to make you so.’

It would be vainly that I should attempt to express the Sentiments that these Words excited in my Soul. I was struck with an Admiration for which I had not been prepared, and which was mixed with Shame, and even Grief. I knew Madam *de Canaples* too well to suspect her of the least Dissimulation, and I was confounded at so great a Generosity from her. I remained some moments stupified, and falling at her Feet. ‘ Do not,’ said I, ‘ Madam, expect my Thanks ; ‘ I am too much humbled by the Excess of your ‘ Goodness, and should indeed be unworthy of it, ‘ if I durst take Advantage of it : Let me deserve ‘ it by my Refusal of it, and by an inviolable Res-
pect.

‘ peft. I ought no longer to live but to consecrate
‘ my Days to you.’

‘ Rife,’ faid ſhe, ‘ I am not furprifed at the Senti-
‘ ments you exprefs. You have, at this Instant
‘ wherewith to give praife to mine : You feel it, and
‘ with a Noblenefs of Soul ; one is never the Object
‘ of an eftimable Procedure, but one is warmed at
‘ the firft with a generous Gratitude. But believe
‘ me, the Love with which Miſs *de Foix* had inspired
‘ you is too well founded not to reaſſume its Empire.
‘ I will not ſuffer you to deceive yourſelf. You
‘ have had no more for me than the Taſte that
‘ ſprings from that Impreſſion which it is natural for
‘ the firſt agreeable Woman to make on the Heart
‘ of a young Man ; an Impreſſion that may have
‘ ſtrengthened by the Habit of living with her. You
‘ preſerved that Taſte probably becauſe you never
‘ met with a Woman eſtimable enough to attach
‘ you conſtantly to her. But Miſs *de Foix*, uniting
‘ to Virtue the Graces of Youth and Beauty has a
‘ right to pleaſe, and to fix you. Was I to accept the
‘ Vows you offer me, your Repentance would not
‘ be long a following them. Honour or Shame
‘ might engage you to keep them for ſome time. I
‘ ſhould ſoon grow burthenſome to you, you would
‘ at length come to openly retract them, and my
‘ Injuſtice would juſtify you.’

‘ Ah ! Madam,’ exclaimed I, ‘ ought you to ima-
‘ gine that after all I owe you, I could ever ceaſe
‘ having for you the moſt lively Attachment ? What
‘ I become ungrateful !’ ‘ Even,’ replied ſhe, ‘ if you
‘ had the Obligations to me you pretend to have, I
‘ know how far the Chain of Gratitude ought to
‘ extend. An unjuſt Benefactor is much more to
‘ be dreaded than an ungrateful Perſon. Ingratitude
‘ ought to excite more Contempt than Regret ; but
‘ the cruelleſt Situation for a true Spirit, is, that
‘ of having to complain of thoſe to whom one has
‘ Obligations ; and you would ſtand in that right
‘ with regard to me.’

I heard

I heard *Madam de Canaples* with a Surprise that put me by all Power to answer her, she spared me the Perplexity of it by going out of her Apartment, and I followed her into the Saloon, where we found *Miss de Foix*.

The different Reflections with which all three of us had our Minds taken up, necessarily produced a Constraint amongst us. We had no longer that Openness of Confidence which springs from a State of Tranquillity. Whatever Freedom of Spirit *Madam de Canaples* endeavoured to show outwardly, I could see through it a Fund of Melancholy and Grief that redoubled mine. *Miss de Foix* appeared anxious about *Madam de Canaples*, and embarrassed towards me. In short there was nothing amongst us but a broken Conversation, Subjects begun and suspended by Intervals of Silence, or renewed by Reflection.

Thus we passed the Day, and in the Evening *Madam de Canaples* retired to her Apartment upon some Business. I saw very well that *Miss de Foix* would not fail soon to follow her, and I thought I could not do better than to employ that instant in speaking to her, not in the Design of advancing my own private Happiness, nor of taking the Benefit of *Madam de Canaples's* Generosity, but purely to try to put an End to the Constraint I might occasion to both the one and the other.

‘ It is true,’ said I, ‘ *Miss*, that *Madam de Canaples* has had the Goodness to inform you of my Sentiments, and that you have deigned not to reject them? It is true,’ answered *Miss de Foix* blushing, ‘ that I have assured *Madam de Canaples*, that she is the absolute Mistress of my Disposal, and that whatever were her Designs for me, she might depend upon a blind Obedience from me.’

‘ I shall be then indebted to nothing,’ replied I, ‘ but to your Submission to her, and to her must I stand indebted in all my Gratitude?’ I should think said she, ‘ that respecting *Madam de Canaples* as you do, and as she deserves, you ought to approve of my not conducting myself but by her Counsels.

' Besides, what I owe your Sentiments does not make
 ' me forget what I owe to myself, and I have a great
 ' Inquietude on my Spirits, for what I remark of
 ' the same, for some Days past, in Madam *de Cana-*
 ' *ples*. I am ignorant of the Motives of it, but it
 ' seems to me as if it dated only from the Time she
 ' has been taken up with my Establishment. Can I
 ' be the Object of her Uneasiness? Or, if that were
 ' the Case, why interest herself so much for my sake?
 ' I do not know what to think, and am therefore the
 ' more anxious about it. You, who are her Friend,
 ' you, perhaps, may know something of it; deign
 ' to inform me. One cannot but forgive a Curiosity
 ' which proceeds from Tendernefs of Sentiment.'

Miss *de Foix's* Question caused me an Emotion she
 might easily have perceived. I was the more con-
 fused for my not being in a Condition to answer her.
 I should never have dared to own to her the Wrongs I
 was guilty of towards Madam *de Canaples*. Besides
 the Respect I owed her made Dissimulation upon this
 Subject a Duty; it would have been an Excess of
 Injuriousness to have represented her Uneasiness as
 the Effect of my Inconstancy.

Madam *de Canaples*, who returned to us at that In-
 stant, relieved me from the Pain I was in. As I had
 made to myself a Law to hide nothing from her, as soon
 as I found myself alone with her, I gave her an account
 of what I had said to Miss *de Foix*, and of what she
 had answered me, without suppressing that of the
 Uneasiness she had expressed. Madam *de Canaples*
 told me, she would soon convince her of the Sincer-
 ity with which she interested herself in her behalf.'

From that Instant I thought I remarked in Madam
de Canaples more Serenity, which also procured me a
 little more Calm. I passed some time without dar-
 ing to hazard the least Touch upon any Thing rela-
 tive to the Situation I was now in, and only confined
 myself to pay my court to Miss *de Foix*, and my De-
 voirs to Madam *de Canaples*, leaving all the rest to
 Time and Fortune.

At

At length, Madam *de Canaples* told me, ' That having come to a Certainty that Miss *de Foix* had an Inclination for me, she looked upon her as the properest Match for me, and that she would contribute to our Union : That in favour of it she would settle the Reversion of her own Estate upon Miss *de Foix*, and put me in immediate Possession of that of the Count *de Canaples*.'

At these Words I was seized with more Shame than Gratitude. I made her answer ' That I could never consent to so much Generosity, and that if she had absolutely resolved to accomplish my Marriage with Miss *de Foix*, my Fortune was sufficient for her and me.'

' It is not my Intention,' replied Madam *de Canaples*, ' that Miss *de Foix* should owe you too much, even for your own sake. For its not being so, her Tenderness will be the less constrained, and perhaps the more lively. As to myself, since you oblige me to speak more openly than I had proposed to myself, I thought that you had owed me Reparation enough at least not to controul me in my Regulations. Though I never had a Design to yield to the Pressingness you shewed for having me accept the Offer of your Hand, perhaps it has made upon my Heart a greater Impression than it ought to have done. I may have leaned to your Sentiments with too much Complaisance. If that were so, how could I answer for myself against the Weakness and Injustice of Self-love? Notwithstanding all the Friendship I have for you and Miss *de Foix*, you might be in certain Moments, Objects of a small Humiliation to myself. Perhaps it is necessary I should myself contribute to your Happiness, that I may always see it with Pleasure. I ought to omit nothing that may make both the one and the other dear to me. You have lost the Right of refusing my Benefits; suffer me to lay them out upon you, as well for my own Interest, as out of Generosity. I give you in this Moment the strongest Proof of Confidence of which I am capable, or you can be
' worthy.

‘ worthy. Your Gratitude ought to make me no Answer, but by your Silence, and I dare add, by your Respect, and a perfect Submission to my Will.’

It was not in my Power, even if I had durst, to express by Words the Sentiments with which I was penetrated. Those of Love, of Gratitude, of Respect, were all beneath her. I had nothing for it but to feel the profoundest Veneration, and that I could only express by my Confusion.

Two Days after, she made all the Dispositions she thought proper for my Marriage, and I could not avoid remarking with what a decent Address she sought to strengthen, by Motives of Esteem, the Inclination that Miss *de Foix* appeared to have for me. At length our Marriage was celebrated, and from that time my Wife is taken up with nothing but her Study to please me. Madam *de Canaples* seems to make her own Happiness of ours, and what has yet augmented our Felicity, is the Circumstance of owing it to her, and of finding in her a Benefactress, a Mother, a Friend, a Guide, and a Model of Virtue; whilst the happy and tranquil Situation I enjoy, proves to me every Instant, that no true Felicity can exist, but in the Union of Pleasure with Duty.

F I N I S.



